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JANUARY—JUNE, 1874.



WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, EDINBURGH ;

AND

37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

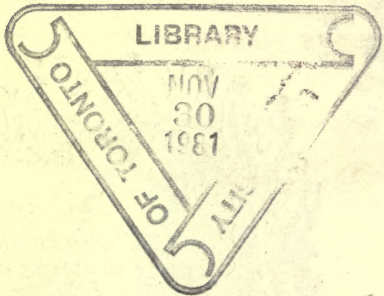
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# BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

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THE PARISIANS.—PART THE LAST.

BOOK TWELFTH—*continued.*

PREFATORY NOTE.

(BY THE AUTHOR'S SON.)

'THE Parisians' and 'Kenelm Chillingly' were begun about the same time, and had their common origin in the same central idea. That idea first found fantastic expression in 'The Coming Race;' and the three books, taken together, constitute a special group distinctly apart from all the other works of their author.

The satire of his earlier novels is a protest against false social respectabilities; the humour of his later ones is a protest against the disrespect of social realities. By the first he sought to promote social sincerity, and the free play of personal character; by the last, to encourage mutual charity and sympathy amongst all classes on whose inter-relation depends the character of society itself. But in these three books, his latest fictions, the moral purpose is more definite and exclusive. Each of them is an expostulation against what seemed to him the perilous popularity of certain social and political theories, or a warning against the influence of certain intellectual tendencies upon individual character and national life. This purpose, however, though common to the three fictions, is worked out in each of them by a different method. 'The Coming Race' is a work of pure fancy, and the satire of it is vague and sportive. The outlines of a definite purpose are more distinctly drawn in 'Chillingly'—a romance which has the source of its effect in a highly-wrought imagination. The humour and pathos of 'Chillingly' are of a kind incompatible with the design of 'The Parisians,' which is a work of dramatised observation. 'Chillingly' is a Romance, 'The Parisians' is a Novel. The subject of 'Chillingly' is psychological; that of 'The Parisians' is social.

The author's object in 'Chillingly' being to illustrate the effect of "modern ideas" upon an individual character, he has confined his narrative to the biography of that one character. Hence the simplicity of plot and small number of *dramatis personæ*; whereby the work gains in height and depth what it loses in breadth of surface. 'The Parisians,' on the contrary, is designed to illustrate the effect of "modern ideas" upon a whole community. This novel is therefore panoramic in the profusion and variety of figures presented by it to the reader's imagination. No exclusive prominence is vouchsafed to any of these figures. All of them are drawn and coloured with an equal care, but by means of the bold broad touches necessary for their effective presentation on a canvas so large and so crowded. Such figures are, indeed, but the component features of one great Form, and their actions only so many modes of one collective impersonal character—that of the Parisian Society of Imperial and Democratic France;—a character everywhere present and busy throughout the story, of which it is the real hero or heroine. This society was doubtless selected for characteristic illustration as being the most advanced in the progress of "modern ideas." Thus, for a complete perception of its writer's fundamental purpose, 'The Parisians' should be read in connection with 'Chillingly,' and these two books in connection with 'The Coming Race.' It will then be perceived that, through the medium of alternate fancy, sentiment, and observation, assisted by humour and passion, these three books (in all other respects so different from each other) complete the presentation of the same purpose under different aspects; and thereby constitute a group of fictions which claims a separate place of its own in any thoughtful classification of their author's works.

One last word to those who will miss from these pages the connecting and completing touches of the master's hand.\* It may be hoped that such a disadvantage, though irreparable, is somewhat mitigated by the essential character of the work itself. The æsthetic merit of this kind of novel is in the vivacity of a general effect produced by large swift strokes of character; and in such strokes, if they be by a great artist, force and freedom of style must still be apparent, even when they are left rough and unfinished. Nor can any lack of final verbal correction much diminish the intellectual value which many of the more thoughtful passages of the present work derive from a long, keen, and practical study of political phenomena, guided by personal experience of public life, and enlightened by a large, instinctive knowledge of the human heart.

Such a belief is, at least, encouraged by the private communications spontaneously made, to him who expresses it, by persons of political experience and social position in France; who have acknowledged the general accuracy of the author's descriptions, and noticed the suggestive sagacity and penetration of his occasional comments on the circumstances and sentiments he describes.

It only remains to discharge a debt of gratitude to Messrs Blackwood by thus publicly acknowledging the careful and scrupulous attention they have given to the printing of this book, and the efforts made by them, under exceptionally difficult conditions, to present to their readers

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\* See also Note by the Author's Son, p. 27.



in the best possible form, this, the last of that long list of well-known fictions, which throughout every region of Europe and America have now for so many years associated their name with that of its author.

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## CHAPTER V.

The time now came when all provision of food or of fuel failed the modest household of Isaura; and there was not only herself and the Venosta to feed and warm—there were the servants whom they had brought from Italy, and had not the heart now to dismiss to the certainty of famine. True, one of the three, the man, had returned to his native land before the commencement of the siege; but the two women had remained. They supported themselves now as they could on the meagre rations accorded by the Government. Still Isaura attended the ambulance to which she was attached. From the ladies associated with her she could readily have obtained ample supplies; but they had no conception of her real state of destitution; and there was a false pride generally prevalent among the respectable classes, which Isaura shared, that concealed distress lest alms should be proffered.

The destitution of the household had been carefully concealed from the parents of Gustave Rameau until, one day, Madame Rameau, entering at the hour at which she generally, and her husband sometimes, came for a place by the fire-side and a seat at the board, found on the one only ashes, on the other a ration of the black nauseous compound which had become the substitute for bread.

Isaura was absent on her duties at the ambulance hospital, — purposely absent, for she shrank from the bitter task of making clear to the friends of her betrothed the

impossibility of continuing the aid to their support which their son had neglected to contribute; and still more from the comment which she knew they would make on his conduct, in absenting himself so wholly of late, and in the time of such trial and pressure, both from them and from herself. Truly, she rejoiced at that absence so far as it affected herself. Every hour of the day she silently asked her conscience whether she were not now absolved from a promise won from her only by an assurance that she had power to influence for good the life that now voluntarily separated itself from her own. As she had never loved Gustave, so she felt no resentment at the indifference his conduct manifested. On the contrary, she hailed it as a sign that the annulment of their betrothal would be as welcome to him as to herself. And if so, she could restore to him the sort of compassionate friendship she had learned to cherish in the hour of his illness and repentance. She had resolved to seize the first opportunity he afforded to her of speaking to him with frank and truthful plainness. But, meanwhile, her gentle nature recoiled from the confession of her resolve to appeal to Gustave himself for the rupture of their engagement.

Thus the Venosta alone received Madame Rameau; and while that lady was still gazing round her with an emotion too deep for immediate utterance, her husband entered with an expression of face new to him—the look of a man who has been stung to anger, and who has braced



his mind to some stern determination. This altered countenance of the good-tempered *bourgeois* was not, however, noticed by the two women. The Venosta did not even raise her eyes to it, as with humbled accents she said, "Pardon, dear Monsieur, pardon, Madame, our want of hospitality; it is not our hearts that fail. We kept our state from you as long as we could. Now it speaks for itself: '*la fame è una bratta festin*.'"

"Oh, Madame! and oh, my poor Isaura!" cried Madame Rameau, bursting into tears. "So we have been all this time a burden on you,—aided to bring such want on you! How can we ever be forgiven? And my son,—to leave us thus,—not even to tell us where to find him!"

"Do not degrade us, my wife," said M. Rameau, with unexpected dignity, "by a word to imply that we would stoop to sue for support to our ungrateful child. No, we will not starve! I am strong enough still to find food for you. I will apply for restoration to the National Guard. They have augmented the pay to married men; it is now nearly two francs and a half a-day to a *père de famille*, and on that pay we all can at least live. Courage, my wife! I will go at once for employment. Many men older than I am are at watch on the ramparts, and will march to the battle on the next sortie."

"It shall not be so," exclaimed Madame Rameau, vehemently, and winding her arm round her husband's neck. "I loved my son better than thee once—more the shame to me. Now, I would rather lose twenty such sons than peril thy life, my Jacques! Madame," she continued, turning to the Venosta, "thou wert wiser than I. Thou wert ever opposed to the union between thy young friend

and my son. I felt sore with thee for it—a mother is so selfish when she puts herself in the place of her child. I thought that only through marriage with one so pure, so noble, so holy, Gustave could be saved from sin and evil. I am deceived. A man so heartless to his parents, so neglectful of his affianced, is not to be redeemed. I brought about this betrothal: tell Isaura that I release her from it. I have watched her closely since she was entrapped into it. I know how miserable the thought of it has made her, though, in her sublime devotion to her plighted word, she sought to conceal from me the real state of her heart. If the betrothal bring such sorrow, what would the union do! Tell her this from me. Come, Jacques, come away!"

"Stay, Madame!" exclaimed the Venosta, her excitable nature much affected by this honest outburst of feeling. "It is true that I did oppose, so far as I could, my poor *Piccola's* engagement with M. Gustave. But I dare not do your bidding. Isaura would not listen to me. And let us be just; M. Gustave may be able satisfactorily to explain his seeming indifference and neglect. His health is always very delicate; perhaps he may be again dangerously ill. He serves in the National Guard; perhaps,"—she paused, but the mother conjectured the word left unsaid, and, clasping her hands, cried out in anguish, "Perhaps dead!—and we have wronged him! Oh, Jacques, Jacques! how shall we find out—how discover our boy? Who can tell us where to search? at the hospital—or in the cemeteries?" At the last word she dropped into a seat, and her whole frame shook with her sobs.

Jacques approached her tenderly, and kneeling by her side, said—

"No, *m'amie*, comfort thyself, if



it be indeed comfort to learn that thy son is alive and well. For my part, I know not if I would not rather he had died in his innocent childhood. I have seen him — spoken to him. I know where he is to be found."

"You do, and concealed it from me? Oh, Jacques!"

"Listen to me, wife, and you too, Madame; for what I have to say should be made known to Mademoiselle Cicogna. Some time since, on the night of the famous *sortie*, when at my post on the ramparts, I was told that Gustave had joined himself to the most violent of the Red Republicans, and had uttered at the *Club de la Vengeance* sentiments, of which I will only say that I his father and a Frenchman, hung my head with shame when they were repeated to me. I resolved to go to the club myself. I did. I heard him speak—heard him denounce Christianity as the instrument of tyrants."

"Ah!" cried the two women, with a simultaneous shudder.

"When the assembly broke up, I waylaid him at the door. I spoke to him seriously. I told him what anguish such announcement of blasphemous opinions would inflict on his pious mother. I told him I should deem it my duty to inform Mademoiselle Cicogna, and warn her against the union on which he had told us his heart was bent. He appeared sincerely moved by what I said; implored me to keep silence towards his mother and his betrothed; and promised, on that condition, to relinquish at once what he called 'his career as an orator,' and appear no more at such execrable clubs. On this understanding I held my tongue. Why, with such other causes of grief and suffering, should I tell thee, poor wife, of a sin that I hoped thy son had

repented and would not repeat? And Gustave kept his word. He has never, so far as I know, attended, at least spoken, at the Red clubs since that evening."

"Thank heaven so far," murmured Madame Rameau.

"So far, yes; but hear more. A little time after I thus met him he changed his lodging, and did not confide to us his new address, giving as a reason to us that he wished to avoid all clue to his discovery by that pertinacious Mademoiselle Julie."

Rameau had here sunk his voice into a whisper, intended only for his wife, but the ear of the Venosta was fine enough to catch the sound, and she repeated, "Mademoiselle Julie! Santa Maria! who is she?"

"Oh," said M. Rameau, with a shrug of his shoulders, and with true Parisian *sang froid* as to such matters of morality, "a trifle not worth considering. Of course a good-looking *garçon* like Gustave must have his little affairs of the heart before he settles for life. Unluckily, amongst those of Gustave was one with a violent-tempered girl who persecuted him when he left her, and he naturally wished to avoid all chance of a silly scandal, if only out of respect to the dignity of his *fiancée*. But I found that was not the true motive, or at least the only one, for concealment. Prepare yourself, my poor wife. Thou hast heard of these terrible journals which the *déchéance* has let loose upon us. Our unhappy boy is the principal writer of one of the worst of them, under the name of 'Diderot le Jeune.'"

"What!" cried the Venosta. "That monster! The good Abbé Vertpré was telling us of the writings with that name attached to them. The Abbé himself is de-



nounced by name as one of those meddling priests who are to be constrained to serve as soldiers, or pointed out to the vengeance of the *canaille*. Isaura's *fiancée* a blasphemer!"

"Hush, hush!" said Madame Rameau rising, very pale but self-collected. "How do you know this, Jacques?"

"From the lips of Gustave himself. I heard first of it yesterday from one of the young reprobates with whom he used to be familiar, and who even complimented me on the rising fame of my son, and praised the eloquence of his article that day. But I would not believe him. I bought the journal—here it is; saw the name and address of the printer—went this morning to the office—was there told that 'Diderot le Jeune' was within revising the press—stationed myself by the street door, and when Gustave came out I seized his arm and asked him to say Yes or No if he was the author of this infamous article,—this, which I now hold in my hand. He owned the authorship with pride; talked wildly of the great man he was—of the great things he was to do; said that, in hitherto concealing his true name, he had done all he could to defer to the bigoted prejudices of his parents and his *fiancée*; and that if genius, like fire, would find its way out, he

could not help it; that a time was rapidly coming when his opinions would be uppermost; that since October the Communists were gaining ascendancy, and only waited the end of the siege to put down the present Government, and with it all hypocrisies and shams, religious or social. My wife, he was rude to me, insulting; but he had been drinking—that made him incautious: and he continued to walk by my side towards his own lodging, on reaching which he ironically invited me to enter, saying, 'I should meet there men who would soon argue me out of my obsolete notions.' You may go to him, wife, now, if you please. I will not, nor will I take from him a crust of bread. I came hither, determined to tell the young lady all this, if I found her at home. I should be a dishonoured man if I suffered her to be cheated into misery. There, Madame Venosta, there! Take that journal, show it to Mademoiselle, and report to her all I have said."

M. Rameau, habitually the mildest of men, had, in talking, worked himself up into positive fury.

His wife, calmer but more deeply affected, made a piteous sign to the Venosta not to say more; and without other salutation or adieu took her husband's arm, and led him from the house.

#### CHAPTER VI.

Obtaining from her husband Gustave's address, Madame Rameau hastened to her son's apartment alone through the darkling streets. The house in which he lodged was in a different quarter from that in which Isaura had visited him. Then, the street selected was still in the centre of the *beau monde*—

now, it was within the precincts of that section of the many-faced capital in which the *beau monde* was held in detestation or scorn; still the house had certain pretensions, boasting a courtyard and a porter's lodge. Madame Rameau, instructed to mount *au second*, found the door ajar, and, entering,



perceived on the table of the little *salon* the remains of a feast which, however untempting it might have been in happier times, contrasted strongly the meagre fare of which Gustave's parents had deemed themselves fortunate to partake at the board of his betrothed;—remnants of those viands which offered to the inquisitive epicure an experiment in food much too costly for the popular stomach—dainty morsels of elephant, hippopotamus, and wolf, interspersed with half-emptied bottles of varied and high-priced wines. Passing these evidences of unseasonable extravagance with a mute sentiment of anger and disgust, Madame Rameau penetrated into a small cabinet, the door of which was also ajar, and saw her son stretched on his bed half dressed, breathing heavily in the sleep which follows intoxication. She did not attempt to disturb him. She placed herself quietly by his side, gazing mournfully on the face which she had once so proudly contemplated, now haggard and faded,—still strangely beautiful, though it was the beauty of ruin.

From time to time he stirred uneasily, and muttered broken words, in which fragments of his own delicately worded verse were incoherently mixed up with ribald slang, addressed to imaginary companions. In his dreams he was evidently living over again his late revel, with episodic diversions into the poet-world, of which he was rather a vagrant nomad than a settled cultivator. Then she would silently bathe his feverish temples with the perfumed water she found on his dressing-table. And so she watched till, in the middle of the night, he woke up, and recovered the possession of his reason with a quickness that surprised Madame Rameau. He was,

indeed, one of those men in whom excess of drink, when slept off, is succeeded by extreme mildness, the effect of nervous exhaustion, and by a dejected repentance, which, to his mother, seemed a propitious lucidity of the moral sense.

Certainly on seeing her he threw himself on her breast, and began to shed tears. Madame Rameau had not the heart to reproach him sternly. But by gentle degrees she made him comprehend the pain he had given to his father, and the destitution in which he had deserted his parents and his affianced. In his present mood Gustave was deeply affected by these representations. He excused himself feebly by dwelling on the excitement of the times, the preoccupation of his mind, the example of his companions; but with his excuses he mingled passionate expressions of remorse, and before daybreak mother and son were completely reconciled. Then he fell into a tranquil sleep; and Madame Rameau, quite worn out, slept also in the chair beside him, her arm around his neck. He awoke before she did at a late hour in the morning; and stealing from her arm, went to his *escritoire*, and took forth what money he found there, half of which he poured into her lap, kissing her till she awoke.

"Mother," he said, "henceforth I will work for thee and my father. Take this trifle now; the rest I reserve for Isaura."

"Joy! I have found my boy again. But Isaura, I fear that she will not take thy money, and all thought of her must also be abandoned."

Gustave had already turned to his looking-glass, and was arranging with care his dark ringlets: his personal vanity—his remorse

appeased by this pecuniary oblation—had revived.

“No,” he said, gaily, “I don’t think I shall abandon her; and it is not likely, when she sees and hears me, that she can wish to abandon me! Now let us breakfast, and then I will go at once to her.”

In the meanwhile, Isaura, on her return to her apartment at the wintry nightfall, found a cart stationed at the door, and the Venosta on the threshold, superintending the removal of various articles of furniture—indeed, all such articles as were not absolutely required.

“Oh, *Piccola!*” she said, with an attempt at cheerfulness, “I did not expect thee back so soon.” “Hush! I have made a famous bargain. I have found a broker to buy these things which we don’t want just at present, and can replace by new and prettier things when the siege is over and we get our money. The broker pays down on the nail, and thou wilt not go to bed without supper. There are no ills which are not more supportable after food.”

Isaura smiled faintly, kissed the Venosta’s cheek, and ascended with weary steps to the sitting-room. There she seated herself quietly, looking with abstracted eyes round the bare dismantled space by the light of the single candle.

When the Venosta re-entered,

she was followed by the servants, bringing in a daintier meal than they had known for days—a genuine rabbit, potatoes, *marrons glacés*, a bottle of wine, and a pannier of wood. The fire was soon lighted, the Venosta plying the bellows. It was not till this banquet, of which Isaura, faint as she was, scarcely partook, had been remitted to the two Italian women-servants, and another log been thrown on the hearth, that the Venosta opened the subject which was pressing on her heart. She did this with a joyous smile, taking both Isaura’s hands in her own, and stroking them fondly.

“My child, I have such good news for thee! Thou hast escaped—thou art free!” and then she related all that M. Rameau had said, and finished by producing the copy of Gustave’s unhallowed journal.

When she had read the latter, which she did with compressed lips and varying colour, the girl fell on her knees—not to thank heaven that she would now escape a union from which her soul so recoiled—not that she was indeed free,—but to pray, with tears rolling down her cheeks, that God would yet save to Himself, and to good ends, the soul that she had failed to bring to Him. All previous irritation against Gustave was gone: all had melted into an ineffable compassion.

## CHAPTER VII.

When, a little before noon, Gustave was admitted by the servant into Isaura’s *salon*, its desolate condition, stripped of all its pretty feminine elegancies, struck him with a sense of discomfort to himself which superseded any more remorseful sentiment. The day was

intensely cold: the single log on the hearth did not burn; there were only two or three chairs in the room; even the carpet, which had been of gaily coloured Aubusson, was gone. His teeth chattered; and he only replied by a dreary nod to the servant, who in-



formed him that Madame Venosta was gone out, and Mademoiselle had not yet quitted her own room.

If there be a thing which a true Parisian of Rameau's stamp associates with love of woman, it is a certain sort of elegant surroundings,—a pretty *boudoir*, a cheery hearth, an easy *fauteuil*. In the absence of such attributes, "*fugit retro Venus*.' If the Englishman invented the word comfort, it is the Parisian who most thoroughly comprehends the thing. And he resents the loss of it in any house where he has been accustomed to look for it as a personal wrong to his feelings.

Left for some minutes alone, Gustave occupied himself with kindling the log, and muttering, "*Par tous les diables, quel chien de rhume je vais attraper!*" He turned as he heard the rustle of a robe and a light slow step. Isaura stood before him. Her aspect startled him. He had come prepared to expect grave displeasure and a frigid reception. But the expression of Isaura's face was more kindly, more gentle, more tender, than he had seen it since the day she had accepted his suit.

Knowing from his mother what his father had said to his prejudice, he thought within himself, "After all, the poor girl loves me better than I thought. She is sensible and enlightened; she cannot pretend to dictate an opinion to a man like me."

He approached with a complacent self-assured mien, and took her hand, which she yielded to him quietly, leading her to one of the few remaining chairs, and seating himself beside her.

"Dear Isaura," he said, talking rapidly all the while he performed this ceremony, "I need not assure you of my utter ignorance of the state to which the imbecility of our Government, and the cowardice, or

rather the treachery, of our generals, has reduced you. I only heard of it late last night from my mother. I hasten to claim my right to share with you the humble resources which I have saved by the intellectual labours that have absorbed all such moments as my military drudgeries left to the talents which, even at such a moment, paralysing minds less energetic, have sustained me:"—and therewith he poured several pieces of gold and silver on the table beside her chair.

"Gustave," then said Isaura, "I am well pleased that you thus prove that I was not mistaken when I thought and said that, despite all appearances, all errors, your heart was good. Oh, do but follow its true impulses, and——"

"Its impulses lead me ever to thy feet," interrupted Gustave, with a fervour which sounded somewhat theatrical and hollow.

The girl smiled, not bitterly, not mockingly; but Gustave did not like the smile.

"Poor Gustave," she said, with a melancholy pathos in her soft voice, "do you not understand that the time has come when such commonplace compliments ill suit our altered positions to each other? Nay, listen to me patiently; and let not my words in this last interview pain you to recall. If either of us be to blame in the engagement hastily contracted, it is I. Gustave, when you, exaggerating in your imagination the nature of your sentiments for me, said with such earnestness that on my consent to our union depended your health, your life, your career; that if I withheld that consent you were lost, and in despair would seek distraction from thought in all from which your friends, your mother, the duties imposed upon Genius for the good of Man to the ends of God, should withhold and

save you—when you said all this, and I believed it, I felt as if Heaven commanded me not to desert the soul which appealed to me in the crisis of its struggle and peril. Gustave, I repent; I was to blame.”

“How to blame?”

“I overrated my power over your heart: I overrated still more, perhaps, my power over my own.”

“Ah, your own! I understand now. You did not love me?”

“I never said that I loved you in the sense in which you use the word. I told you that the love which you have described in your verse, and which,” she added, falteringly, with heightened colour and with hands tightly clasped, “I have conceived possible in my dreams, it was not mine to give. You declared you were satisfied with such affection as I could bestow. Hush! let me go on. You said that affection would increase, would become love, in proportion as I knew you more. It has not done so. Nay, it passed away, even before, in this time of trial and grief, I became aware how different from the love you professed was the neglect which needs no excuse, for it did not pain me.”

“You are cruel indeed, Made-moiselle.”

“No, indeed, I am kind. I wish you to feel no pang at our parting. Truly I had resolved, when the siege terminated, and the time to speak frankly of our engagement came, to tell you that I shrank from the thought of a union between us; and that it was for the happiness of both that our promises should be mutually cancelled. The moment has come sooner than I thought. Even had I loved you, Gustave, as deeply as—as well as the beings of Romance love, I would not dare to wed one who calls upon mortals to deny

God, demolish His altars, treat His worship as a crime. No; I would sooner die of a broken heart, that I might the sooner be one of those souls privileged to pray the Divine Intercessor for merciful light on those beloved and left dark on earth.”

“Isaura!” exclaimed Gustave, his mobile temperament impressed, not by the words of Isaura, but by the passionate earnestness with which they were uttered, and by the exquisite spiritual beauty which her face took from the combined sweetness and fervour of its devout expression,—“Isaura, I merit your censure, your sentence of condemnation; but do not ask me to give back your plighted troth. I have not the strength to do so. More than ever, more than when first pledged to me, I need the aid, the companionship, of my guardian angel. You were that to me once; abandon me not now. In these terrible times of revolution, excitable natures catch madness from each other. A writer in the heat of his passion says much that he does not mean to be literally taken, which in cooler moments he repents and retracts. Consider, too, the pressure of want, of hunger. It is the opinions that you so condemn which alone at this moment supply bread to the writer. But say you will yet pardon me,—yet give me trial if I offend no more—if I withdraw my aid to any attacks on your views, your religion—if I say, ‘Thy God shall be my God, and thy people shall be my people.’”

“Alas!” said Isaura, softly, “ask thyself if those be words which I can believe again. Hush!” she continued, checking his answer, with a more kindling countenance and more impassioned voice. “Are they, after all, the words that man should address to woman? Is it



on the strength of Woman that Man should rely? Is it to her that he should say, 'Dictate my opinions on all that belongs to the Mind of man; change the doctrines that I have thoughtfully formed and honestly advocate; teach me how to act on earth, clear all my doubts as to my hopes of heaven'? No, Gustave; in this task man never should repose on woman. Thou art honest at this moment, my poor friend; but could I believe thee to-day, thou wouldst laugh to-morrow at what woman can be made to believe."

Stung to the quick by the truth of Isaura's accusation, Gustave exclaimed with vehemence—"All that thou sayest is false, and thou knowest it. The influence of woman on man for good or for evil defies reasoning. It does mould his deeds on earth; it does either make or mar all that future which lies between his life and his grave-stone, and of whatsoever may lie

beyond the grave. Give me up now, and thou art responsible for me, for all I do, it may be against all that thou deemest holy. Keep thy troth yet a while, and test me. If I come to thee showing how I could have injured, and how for thy dear sake I have spared, nay, aided, all that thou dost believe and reverence, then wilt thou dare to say, 'Go thy ways alone—I forsake thee!'"

Isaura turned aside her face, but she held out her hand—it was as cold as death. He knew that she had so far yielded, and his vanity exulted: he smiled in secret triumph as he pressed his kiss on that icy hand, and was gone.

"This is duty—it must be duty," said Isaura to herself. "But where is the buoyant delight that belongs to a duty achieved?—where? oh, where?" And then she stole, with drooping head and heavy step, into her own room, fell on her knees, and prayed.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

In vain persons, be they male or female, there is a complacent self-satisfaction in any momentary personal success, however little that success may conduce to—nay, however much it may militate against—the objects to which their vanity itself devotes its more permanent desires. A vain woman may be very anxious to win A——, the magnificent, as a partner for life, and yet feel a certain triumph when a glance of her eye has made an evening's conquest of the pitiful B——, although by that achievement she incurs the imminent hazard of losing A—— altogether. So, when Gustave Rameau quitted Isaura, his first feeling was that of triumph. His eloquence had subdued her will: she had not finally

discarded him. But as he wandered abstractedly in the biting air, his self-complacency was succeeded by mortification and discontent. He felt that he had committed himself to promises which he was by no means prepared to keep. True, the promises were vague in words; but in substance they were perfectly clear—"to spare, nay, to aid, all that Isaura esteemed and revered." How was this possible to him? How could he suddenly change the whole character of his writings?—how become the defender of marriage and property, of Church and religion?—how proclaim himself so utter an apostate? If he did, how become a leader of the fresh revolution? how escape being its victim?

Cease to write altogether? But then how live? His pen was his sole subsistence, save 30 sous a-day as a National Guard—30 sous a-day to him who, in order to be Sybarite in tastes, was Spartan in doctrine. Nothing better just at that moment than Spartan doctrine—"Live on black broth, and fight the enemy." And the journalists in vogue so thrived upon that patriotic sentiment, that they were the last persons compelled to drink the black broth or to fight the enemy.

"Those women are such idiots when they meddle in politics," grumbled between his teeth the enthusiastic advocate of Woman's Rights on all matters of love. "And," he continued, soliloquising, "it is not as if the girl had any large or decent *dot*; it is not as if she said, 'In return for the sacrifice of your popularity, your prospects, your opinions, I give you not only a devoted heart, but an excellent table and a capital fire and plenty of pocket-money.' *Sacre bleu!* when I think of that frozen *salon*, and possibly the leg of a mouse for dinner, and a virtuous homily by way of grace, the prospect is not alluring; and the girl herself is not so pretty as she was—grown very thin. *Sur mon âme*, I think she asks too much—far more than she is worth. No, no; I had better have accepted her dismissal. *Elle n'est pas digne de moi.*"

Just as he arrived at that conclusion, Gustave Rameau felt the touch of a light, a soft, a warm, yet a firm hand, on his arm. He turned, and beheld the face of the woman whom, through so many dreary weeks, he had sought to shun—the face of Julie Caumartin. Julie was not, as Savarin had seen her, looking pinched and wan, with faded robes, nor, as when met in the *café* by Lemercier, in the faded robes of a theatre. Julie never

looked more beautiful, more radiant, than she did now; and there was a wonderful heartfelt fondness in her voice when she cried, "*Mon homme! mon homme! seul homme au monde à mon cœur, Gustave, chéri adoré!* I have found thee—at last—at last!" Gustave gazed upon her, stupefied. Involuntarily his eye glanced from the freshness of bloom in her face, which the intense cold of the atmosphere only seemed to heighten into purer health, to her dress, which was new and handsome—black—he did not know that it was mourning—the cloak trimmed with costly sables. Certainly it was no mendicant for alms who thus reminded the shivering Adonis of the claims of a pristine Venus. He stammered out her name—"Julie!"—and then he stopped.

"*Oui, ta Julie! Petit ingrat!* how I have sought for thee! how I have hungered for the sight of thee! That monster Savarin! he would not give me any news of thee. That is ages ago. But at least Frederic Lemercier, whom I saw since, promised to remind thee that I lived still. He did not do so, or I should have seen thee—*n'est ce pas?*"

"Certainly, certainly—only—*chère amie*—you know that—that—as I before announced to thee, I—I—was engaged in marriage—and—and——"

"But are you married?"

"No, no. Hark! Take care—is not that the hiss of an *obus*?"

"What then? Let it come! Would it might slay us both while my hand is in thine!"

"Ah!" muttered Gustave, inwardly, "what a difference! This is love! No preaching here! *Elle est plus digne de moi que l'autre.*"

"No," he said, aloud, "I am not married. Marriage is at best a pitiful ceremony. But if you



wished for news of me, surely you must have heard of my effect as an orator not despised in the Salle Favre. Since, I have withdrawn from that arena. But as a journalist I flatter myself that I have had a *beau succès*."

"Doubtless, doubtless, my Gustave, my Poet! Wherever thou art, thou must be first among men. But, alas! it is my fault—my misfortune. I have not been in the midst of a world that perhaps rings of thy name."

"Not my name. Prudence compelled me to conceal that. Still, Genius pierces under any name. You might have discovered me under my *nom de plume*."

"Pardon me—I was always *bête*. But, oh! for so many weeks I was so poor—so destitute. I could go nowhere, except—don't be ashamed of me—except——"

"Yes? Go on."

"Except where I could get some money. At first to dance—you remember my *bolero*. Then I got a better engagement. Do you not remember that you taught me to recite verses? Had it been for myself alone, I might have been contented to starve. Without thee, what was life? But thou wilt recollect Madeleine, the old *bonne* who lived with me. Well, she had attended and cherished me since I was so high—lived with my mother. Mother! no; it seems that Madame Surville was not my mother after all. But, of course, I could not let my old Madeleine starve; and therefore, with a heart heavy as lead, I danced and declaimed. My heart was not so heavy when I recited thy songs."

"My songs! *Pauvre ange!*" exclaimed the Poet.

"And then, too, I thought, 'Ah! this dreadful siege! He, too, may be poor—he may know want and hunger;' and so all I could save

from Madeleine I put into a box for thee, in case thou shouldst come back to me some day. *Mon homme*, how could I go to the Salle Favre? How could I read journals, Gustave? But thou art not married, Gustave? *Parole d'honneur?*"

"*Parole d'honneur!* What does that matter?"

"Everything! Ah! I am not so *méchante*, so *mauvaise tête*, as I was some months ago. If thou wert married, I should say, 'Blessed and sacred be thy wife! Forget me.' But as it is, one word more. Dost thou love the young lady, whoever she be? or does she love thee so well that it would be sin in thee to talk trifles to Julie? Speak as honestly as if thou wert not a poet."

"Honestly, she never said she loved me. I never thought she did. But, you see, I was very ill, and my parents and friends and my physician said that it was right for me to arrange my life, and marry, and so forth. And the girl had money, and was a good match. In short, the thing was settled. But oh, Julie, she never learned my songs by heart! She did not love as thou didst, and still dost. And—ah! well—now that we meet again—now that I look in thy face—now that I hear thy voice—— No, I do not love her as I loved, and might yet love, thee. But—but——"

"Well, but? oh, I guess. Thou seest me well dressed, no longer dancing and declaiming at *cafés*: and thou thinkest that Julie has disgraced herself? she is unfaithful?"

Gustave had not anticipated that frankness, nor was the idea which it expressed uppermost in his mind when he said, "but, but——" There were many *buts*, all very confused, struggling through his mind as he spoke. However, he answered as a Parisian sceptic, not ill bred, naturally would answer—

“My dear friend, my dear child” (the Parisian is very fond of the word *child* or *enfant* in addressing a woman), “I have never seen thee so beautiful as thou art now; and when thou tellest me that thou art no longer poor, and the proof of what thou sayest is visible in the furs, which, alas! I cannot give thee, what am I to think?”

“Oh, *mon homme, mon homme!* thou art very *spirituel*, and that is why I loved thee. I am very *bête*, and that is excuse enough for thee if thou couldst not love me. But canst thou look me in the face and not know that my eyes could not meet thine as they do, if I had been faithless to thee even in a thought, when I so boldly touched thine arm? *Viens chez moi*, come and let me

explain all. Only—only let me repeat, if another has rights over thee which forbid thee to come, say so kindly, and I will never trouble thee again.”

Gustave had been hitherto walking slowly by the side of Julie, amidst the distant boom of the besiegers’ cannon, while the short day began to close; and along the dreary Boulevards sauntered idlers turning to look at the young, beautiful, well-dressed woman who seemed in such contrast to the capital whose former luxuries the “Ondine” of imperial Paris represented. He now offered his arm to Julie; and, quickening his pace, said, “There is no reason why I should refuse to attend thee home, and listen to the explanations thou dost generously condescend to volunteer.”

#### CHAPTER IX.

“Ah, indeed! what a difference! what a difference!” said Gustave to himself when he entered Julie’s apartment. In her palmier days, when he had first made her acquaintance, the apartment no doubt had been infinitely more splendid, more abundant in silks and fringes and flowers and nick-nacks; but never had it seemed so cheery and comfortable and home-like as now. What a contrast to Isaura’s dismantled chilly *salon*! She drew him towards the hearth, on which, blazing though it was, she piled fresh billets, seated him in the easiest of easy-chairs, knelt beside him, and chafed his numbed hands in hers; and as her bright eyes fixed tenderly on his, she looked so young and so innocent! You would not then have called her the “Ondine of Paris.”

But when, a little while after, revived by the genial warmth and moved by the charm of her beauty,

Gustave passed his arm round her neck and sought to draw her on his lap, she slid from his embrace, shaking her head gently, and seated herself, with a pretty air of ceremonious decorum, at a little distance.

Gustave looked at her amazed.

“*Causez,*” said she, gravely: “thou wouldst know why I am so well dressed, so comfortably lodged, and I am longing to explain to thee all. Some days ago I had just finished my performance at the Café —, and was putting on my shawl, when a tall Monsieur, *fort bel homme*, with the air of a *grand seigneur*, entered the *café*, and, approaching me politely, said, ‘I think I have the honour to address Made-moiselle Julie Caumartin?’ ‘That is my name,’ I said, surprised; and, looking at him more intently, I recognised his face. He had come into the *café* a few days before with thine old acquaintance Frederic Lemer cier, and stood by when I



asked Frederic to give me news of thee. 'Mademoiselle,' he continued, with a serious melancholy smile, 'I shall startle you when I say that I am appointed to act as your guardian by the last request of your mother.' 'Of Madame Surville?' 'Madame Surville adopted you, but was not your mother. We cannot talk at ease here. Allow me to request that you will accompany me to Monsieur N——, the *avoué*. It is not very far from this: and by the way I will tell you some news that may sadden, and some news that may rejoice.'

"There was an earnestness in the voice and look of this Monsieur that impressed me. He did not offer me his arm; but I walked by his side in the direction he chose. As we walked he told me in very few words that my mother had been separated from her husband, and for certain family reasons had found it so difficult to rear and provide for me herself, that she had accepted the offer of Madame Surville to adopt me as her own child. While he spoke, there came dimly back to me the remembrance of a lady who had taken me from my first home, when I had been, as I understood, at nurse, and left me with poor dear Madame Surville, saying, 'This is henceforth your mamma.' I never again saw that lady. It seems that many years afterwards my true mother desired to regain me. Madame Surville was then dead. She failed to trace me out, owing, alas! to my own faults and change of name. She then entered a nunnery, but before doing so, assigned a sum of 100,000 francs to this gentleman, who was distantly connected with her, with full power to him to take it to himself, or give it to my use should he discover me, at his discretion. 'I ask you,' continued the Monsieur, 'to go with me to Mons. N——'s, because the sum is still in

his hands. He will confirm my statement. All that I have now to say is this: If you accept my guardianship, if you obey implicitly my advice, I shall consider the interest of this sum which has accumulated since deposited with M. N—— due to you; and the capital will be your *dot* on marriage, if the marriage be with my consent.'

Gustave had listened very attentively, and without interruption, till now; when he looked up, and said with his customary sneer, "Did your Monsieur, *fort bel homme* you say, inform you of the value of the advice, rather of the commands, you were implicitly to obey?"

"Yes," answered Julie, "not then, but later. Let me go on. We arrived at M. N——'s, an elderly grave man. He said that all he knew was that he held the money in trust for the Monsieur with me, to be given to him, with the accumulations of interest, on the death of the lady who had deposited it. If that Monsieur had instructions how to dispose of the money, they were not known to him. All he had to do was to transfer it absolutely to him on the proper certificate of the lady's death. So you see, Gustave, that the Monsieur could have kept all from me if he had liked."

"Your Monsieur is very generous. Perhaps you will now tell me his name."

"No; he forbids me to do it yet."

"And he took this apartment for you, and gave you the money to buy that smart dress and these furs. Bah! *mon enfant*, why try to deceive me? Do I not know my Paris? A *fort bel homme* does not make himself guardian to a *fort belle fille* so young and fair as Mademoiselle Julie Caumartin without certain considerations which shall be nameless, like himself."

Julie's eyes flashed. "Ah, Gus-

tave! ah, Monsieur!" she said, half angrily, half plaintively, "I see that my guardian knew you better than I did. Never mind; I will not reproach. Thou hast the right to despise me."

"Pardon! I did not mean to offend thee," said Gustave, somewhat disconcerted. "But own that thy story is strange; and this guardian, who knows me better than thou—does he know me at all? Didst thou speak to him of me?"

"How could I help it? He says that this terrible war, in which he takes an active part, makes his life uncertain from day to day. He wished to complete the trust bequeathed to him by seeing me safe in the love of some worthy man who"—she paused for a moment with an expression of compressed anguish, and then hurried on—"who would recognise what was good in me,—would never reproach me for—for—the past. I then said that my heart was thine: I could never marry any one but thee."

"Marry me," faltered Gustave—"marry!"

"And," continued the girl, not heeding his interruption, "he said thou wert not the husband he would choose for me: that thou wert not—no, I cannot wound thee by repeating what he said unkindly, unjustly. He bade me think of thee no more. I said again, that is impossible."

"But," resumed Rameau, with an affected laugh, "why think of anything so formidable as marriage? Thou lovest me, and——" He approached again, seeking to embrace her. She recoiled. "No, Gustave, no. I have sworn—sworn solemnly by the memory of my lost mother, that I will never sin again. I will never be to thee other than thy friend—or thy wife."

Before Gustave could reply to these words, which took him wholly by surprise, there was a ring at the

outer door, and the old *bonne* ushered in Victor de Mauléon. He halted at the threshold, and his brow contracted.

"So you have already broken faith with me, Mademoiselle?"

"No, Monsieur, I have not broken faith," cried Julie, passionately. "I told you that I would not seek to find out Monsieur Rameau. I did not seek, but I met him unexpectedly. I owed to him an explanation. I invited him here to give that explanation. Without it, what would he have thought of me? Now he may go, and I will never admit him again without your sanction."

The Vicomte turned his stern look upon Gustave, who though, as we know, not wanting in personal courage, felt cowed by his false position; and his eye fell, quailed before De Mauléon's gaze.

"Leave us for a few minutes alone, Mademoiselle," said the Vicomte. "Nay, Julie," he added, in softened tones, "fear nothing. I, too, owe explanation—friendly explanation—to M. Rameau."

With his habitual courtesy toward women, he extended his hand to Julie, and led her from the room. Then, closing the door, he seated himself, and made a sign to Gustave to do the same.

"Monsieur," said De Mauléon, "excuse me if I detain you. A very few words will suffice for our present interview. I take it for granted that Mademoiselle has told you that she is no child of Madame Surville's: that her own mother bequeathed her to my protection and guardianship, with a modest fortune which is at my disposal to give or withhold. The little I have seen already of Mademoiselle impresses me with sincere interest in her fate. I look with compassion on what she may have been in the past; I anticipate with hope what she may be in the future. I do not



ask you to see her in either with my eyes. I say frankly that it is my intention, and I may add my resolve, that the ward thus left to my charge shall be henceforth safe from the temptations that have seduced her poverty, her inexperience, her vanity if you will, but have not yet corrupted her heart. *Bref*, I must request you to give me your word of honour that you will hold no further communication with her. I can allow no sinister influence to stand between her fate and honour."

"You speak well and nobly, M. le Vicomte," said Rameau, "and I give the promise you exact." He added, feelingly, "It is true, her heart has never been corrupted. That is good, affectionate, unselfish as a child's. *J'ai l'honneur de vous saluer*, M. le Vicomte."

He bowed with a dignity unusual to him, and tears were in his eyes as he passed by De Mauléon and gained the anteroom. There a side-door suddenly opened, and Julie's face, anxious, eager, looked forth.

Gustave paused: "Adieu, Made-moiselle! Though we may never meet again—though our fates divide us—believe me that I shall ever cherish your memory — and——"

The girl interrupted him, impulsively seizing his arm, and looking him in the face with a wild fixed stare.

"Hush! dost thou mean to say that we are parted, — parted for ever?"

"Alas!" said Gustave, "what

option is before us? Your guardian rightly forbids my visits; and even were I free to offer you my hand, you yourself say that I am not a suitor he would approve."

Julie turned her eyes towards De Mauléon, who, following Gustave into the anteroom, stood silent and impassive, leaning against the wall.

He now understood and replied to the pathetic appeal in the girl's eyes.

"My young ward," he said, "M. Rameau expresses himself with propriety and truth. Suffer him to depart. He belongs to the former life; reconcile yourself to the new."

He advanced to take her hand, making a sign to Gustave to depart. But as he approached Julie, she uttered a weak piteous wail, and fell at his feet senseless. De Mauléon raised and carried her into her room, where he left her to the care of the old *bonne*. On re-entering the anteroom, he found Gustave still lingering by the outer door.

"You will pardon me, Monsieur," he said to the Vicomte, "but in fact I feel so uneasy, so unhappy. Has she——? You see, you see that there is danger to her health, perhaps to her reason, in so abrupt a separation, so cruel a rupture between us. Let me call again, or I may not have strength to keep my promise."

De Mauléon remained a few minutes musing. Then he said in a whisper, "Come back into the *salon*. Let us talk frankly."

#### CHAPTER X.

"M. Rameau," said De Mauléon, when the two men had reseated themselves in the *salon*, "I will honestly say that my desire is to

rid myself as soon as I can of the trust of guardian to this young lady. Playing as I do with fortune, my only stake against her

favours is my life. I feel as if it were my duty to see that Mademoiselle is not left alone and friendless in the world at my decease. I have in my mind for her a husband that I think in every way suitable: a handsome and brave young fellow in my battalion, of respectable birth, without any living relations to consult as to his choice. I have reason to believe that if Julie married him, she need never fear a reproach as to her antecedents. Her *dot* would suffice to enable him to realise his own wish of a country town in Normandy. And in that station, Paris and its temptations would soon pass from the poor child's thoughts, as an evil dream. But I cannot dispose of her hand without her own consent; and if she is to be reasoned out of her fancy for you, I have no time to devote to the task. I come to the point. You are not the man I would choose for her husband. But, evidently, you are the man she would choose. Are you disposed to marry her? You hesitate, very naturally; I have no right to demand an immediate answer to a question so serious. Perhaps you will think over it, and let me know in a day or two? I take it for granted that if you were, as I heard, engaged before the siege to marry the Signora Cicogna, that engagement is annulled?"

"Why take it for granted?" asked Gustave, perplexed.

"Simply because I find you here. Nay, spare explanations and excuses. I quite understand that you were invited to come. But a man solemnly betrothed to a *démouille* like the Signora Cicogna, in a time of such dire calamity and peril, could scarcely allow himself to be tempted to accept the invitation of one so beautiful, and so warmly attached to him, as is

Mademoiselle Julie; and on witnessing the passionate strength of that attachment, say that he cannot keep a promise not to repeat his visits. But if I mistake, and you are still betrothed to the Signorina, of course all discussion is at an end."

Gustave hung his head in some shame, and in much bewildered doubt.

The practised observer of men's characters, and of shifting phases of mind, glanced at the poor poet's perturbed countenance with a half-smile of disdain.

"It is for you to judge how far the very love to you so ingenuously evinced by my ward—how far the reasons against marriage with one whose antecedents expose her to reproach—should influence one of your advanced opinions upon social ties. Such reasons do not appear to have with artists the same weight they have with the *bourgeoisie*. I have but to add that the husband of Julie will receive with her hand a *dot* of nearly 120,000 francs; and I have reason to believe that that fortune will be increased—how much, I cannot guess—when the cessation of the siege will allow communication with England. One word more. I should wish to rank the husband of my ward in the number of my friends. If he did not oppose the political opinions with which I identify my own career, I should be pleased to make any rise in the world achieved by me assist to the raising of himself. But my opinions, as during the time we were brought together you were made aware, are those of a practical man of the world, and have nothing in common with Communists, Socialists, Internationalists, or whatever sect would place the aged societies of Europe in Medea's caldron of youth. At a moment like the present, fanatics



and dreamers so abound, that the number of such sinners will necessitate a general amnesty when order is restored. What a poet so young as you may have written or said at such a time will be readily forgotten and forgiven a year or two hence, provided he does not put his notions into violent action. But if you choose to persevere in the views you now advocate, so be it. They will not make poor Julie less

a believer in your wisdom and genius. Only they will separate you from me, and a day may come when I should have the painful duty of ordering you to be shot—*Dii meliora*. Think over all I have thus frankly said. Give me your answer within forty-eight hours; and meanwhile hold no communication with my ward. I have the honour to wish you good-day."

## CHAPTER XI.

The short grim day was closing when Gustave, quitting Julie's apartment, again found himself in the streets. His thoughts were troubled and confused. He was the more affected by Julie's impassioned love for him, by the contrast with Isaura's words and manner in their recent interview. His own ancient fancy for the "Ondine of Paris" became revived by the difficulties between their ancient intercourse which her unexpected scruples and De Mauléon's guardianship interposed. A witty writer thus defines *une passion*, "*une caprice enflammé par des obstacles*." In the ordinary times of peace, Gustave, handsome, aspiring to reputable position in the *beau monde*, would not have admitted any considerations to compromise his station by marriage with a *figurante*. But now the wild political doctrines he had embraced separated his ambition from that *beau monde*, and combined it with ascendancy over the revolutionists of the populace—a direction which he must abandon if he continued his suit to Isaura. Then, too, the immediate possession of Julie's *dot* was not without temptation to a man who was so fond of his personal comforts, and who did not see where to turn for a dinner,

if, obedient to Isaura's "prejudices," he abandoned his profits as a writer in the revolutionary press. The inducements for withdrawal from the cause he had espoused, held out to him with so haughty a coldness by De Mauléon, were not wholly without force, though they irritated his self-esteem. He was dimly aware of the Vicomte's masculine talents for public life; and the high reputation he had already acquired among military authorities, and even among experienced and thoughtful civilians, had weight upon Gustave's impressionable temperament. But though De Mauléon's implied advice here coincided in much with the tacit compact he had made with Isaura, it alienated him more from Isaura herself, for Isaura did not bring to him the fortune which would enable him to suspend his lucubrations, watch the turn of events, and live at ease in the meanwhile; and the *dot* to be received with De Mauléon's ward had those advantages.

While thus meditating, Gustave turned into one of the *cantines* still open, to brighten his intellect with a *petit verre*, and there he found the two colleagues in the extinct Council of Ten, Paul Grimm and Edgar

Ferrier. With the last of these revolutionists Gustave had become intimately *lié*. They wrote in the same journal, and he willingly accepted a distraction from his self-conflict which Edgar offered him in a dinner at the Café Riche, which still offered its hospitalities at no exorbitant price. At this repast, as the drink circulated, Gustave waxed confidential. He longed, poor youth, for an adviser. Could he marry a girl who had been a ballet-dancer, and who had come into an unexpected heritage? "*Est tu fou d'en douter?*" cried Edgar. "What a sublime occasion to manifest thy scorn of the miserable *banalités* of the *bourgeoisie*! It will but increase thy moral power over the people. And then think of the money. What an aid to the cause! What a capital for the launch!—journal all thine own! Besides, when our principles triumph—as triumph they must—what would be marriage but a brief and futile ceremony, to be broken the moment

thou hast cause to complain of thy wife or chafe at the bond? Only get the *dot* into thine own hands. *L'amour passe — reste la cassette.*"

Though there was enough of good in the son of Madame Rameau to revolt at the precise words in which the counsel was given, still, as the fumes of the punch yet more addled his brains, the counsel itself was acceptable; and in that sort of maddened fury which intoxication produces in some excitable temperaments, as Gustave reeled home that night leaning on the arm of stouter Edgar Ferrier, he insisted on going out of his way to pass the house in which Isaura lived, and, pausing under her window, gasped out some verses of a wild song, then much in vogue among the votaries of Felix Pyat, in which everything that existent society deems sacred was reviled in the grossest ribaldry. Happily Isaura's ear heard it not. The girl was kneeling by her bedside absorbed in prayer.

## CHAPTER XII.

Three days after the evening thus spent by Gustave Rameau, Isaura was startled by a visit from M. de Mauléon. She had not seen him since the commencement of the siege, and she did not recognise him at first glance in his military uniform.

"I trust you will pardon my intrusion, Mademoiselle," he said, in the low sweet voice habitual to him in his gentler moods, "but I thought it became me to announce to you the decease of one who, I fear, did not discharge with much kindness the duties her connection with you imposed. Your father's second wife, afterwards Madame Selby, is no more. She died some days since in a convent to which she had retired."

Isaura had no cause to mourn the dead, but she felt a shock in the suddenness of this information; and in that sweet spirit of womanly compassion which entered so largely into her character, and made a part of her genius itself, she murmured tearfully, "The poor Signora! Why could I not have been with her in illness? She might then have learned to love me. And she died in a convent, you say. Ah, her religion was then sincere! Her end was peaceful?"

"Let us not doubt that, Mademoiselle. Certainly she lived to regret any former errors, and her last thought was directed towards such atonement as might be in her power. And it is that desire of



atonement which now strangely mixes me up, Mademoiselle, in your destinies. In that desire for atonement, she left to my charge, as a kinsman distant indeed, but still, perhaps, the nearest with whom she was personally acquainted—a young ward. In accepting that trust, I find myself strangely compelled to hazard the risk of offending you.”

“Offending me? How? Pray speak openly.”

“In so doing, I must utter the name of Gustave Rameau.”

Isaura turned pale and recoiled, but she did not speak.

“Did he inform me rightly that, in the last interview with him three days ago, you expressed a strong desire that the engagement between him and yourself should cease; and that you only, and with reluctance, suspended your rejection of the suit he had pressed on you, in consequence of his entreaties, and of certain assurances as to the changed direction of the talents of which we will assume that he is possessed?”

“Well, well, Monsieur,” exclaimed Isaura, her whole face brightening; “and you come on the part of Gustave Rameau to say that on reflection he does not hold me to our engagement—that in honour and in conscience I am free?”

“I see,” answered De Mauléon, smiling, “that I am pardoned already. It would not pain you if such were my instructions in the embassy I undertake?”

“Pain me? No. But——”

“But what?”

“Must he persist in a course which will break his mother’s heart, and make his father deplore the hour that he was born? Have you influence over him, M. de Mauleon? If so, will you not exert it for his good?”

“You interest yourself still in his fate, Mademoiselle?”

“How can I do otherwise? Did I not consent to share it when my heart shrank from the thought of our union? And now when, if I understand you rightly, I am free, I cannot but think of what was best in him.”

“Alas! Mademoiselle, he is but one of many—a spoilt child of that Circe, imperial Paris. Everywhere I look around, I see but corruption. It was hidden by the halo which corruption itself engenders. The halo is gone, the corruption is visible. Where is the old French manhood? Banished from the heart, it comes out only at the tongue. Were our deeds like our words, Prussia would beg on her knee to be a province of France. Gustave is the fit poet for this generation. Vanity—desire to be known for something, no matter what, no matter by whom—that is the Parisian’s leading motive power;—orator, soldier, poet, all alike. Utterers of fine phrases; despising knowledge, and toil, and discipline; railing against the Germans as barbarians, against their generals as traitors; against God for not taking their part. What can be done to weld this mass of hollow bubbles into the solid form of a nation—the nation it affects to be? What generation can be born out of the unmanly race, inebriate with brag and absinthe? Forgive me this tirade; I have been reviewing the battalion I command. As for Gustave Rameau,—if we survive the siege, and see once more a Government that can enforce order, and a public that will refuse renown for balderdash,—I should not be surprised if Gustave Rameau were among the prettiest imitators of Lamartine’s early ‘Meditations.’ Had he been born under Louis XIV. how loyal he would have been! What sacred tragedies in the style of ‘Athalie’ he would have written,

in the hope of an audience at Versailles! But I detain you from the letter I was charged to deliver to you. I have done so purposely, that I might convince myself that you welcome that release which your too delicate sense of honour shrank too long from demanding."

Here he took forth and placed a letter in Isaura's hand; and, as if to allow her to read it unobserved, retired to the window recess.

Isaura glanced over the letter. It ran thus:—

"I feel that it was only to your compassion that I owed your consent to my suit. Could I have doubted that before, your words when we last met sufficed to convince me. In my selfish pain at the moment, I committed a great wrong. I would have held you bound to a promise from which you desired to be free. Grant me pardon for that, and for all the faults by which I have offended you. In cancelling our engagement, let me hope that I may rejoice in your friendship, your remembrance of me, some gentle and kindly thought. My life may henceforth pass out of contact with yours; but you will ever dwell in my heart, an image pure and holy as the saints in whom you may well believe—they are of your own kindred."

"May I convey to Gustave Rameau any verbal reply to his letter?" asked De Mauléon, turning

as she replaced the letter on the table.

"Only my wishes for his welfare. It might wound him if I added, my gratitude for the generous manner in which he has interpreted my heart, and acceded to its desire."

"Mademoiselle, accept my congratulations. My condolences are for the poor girl left to my guardianship. Unhappily she loves this man; and there are reasons why I cannot withhold my consent to her union with him, should he demand it, now that, in the letter remitted to you, he has accepted your dismissal. If I can keep him out of all the follies and all the evils into which he suffers his vanity to mislead his reason, I will do so;—would I might say, only in compliance with your compassionate injunctions. But henceforth the infatuation of my ward compels me to take some interest in his career. Adieu, Mademoiselle! I have no fear for your happiness now."

Left alone, Isaura stood as one transfigured. All the bloom of her youth seemed suddenly restored. Round her red lips the dimples opened, countless mirrors of one happy smile. "I am free, I am free," she murmured—"joy, joy!" and she passed from the room to seek the Venosta, singing clear, singing loud, as a bird that escapes from the cage and warbles to the heaven it regains the blissful tale of its release.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

In proportion to the nearer roar of the besiegers' cannon, and the sharper gripe of famine within the walls, the Parisians seemed to increase their scorn for the skill of the enemy, and their faith in the sanctity of the capital. All false news was believed as truth; all truthful

news abhorred as falsehood. Listen to the groups round the *cafés*. "The Prussian funds have fallen three per cent at Berlin," says a threadbare ghost of the Bourse (he had been a clerk of Louvier's). "Ay," cries a National Guard, "read extracts from 'La Liberté.' The barbarians are



in despair. Nancy is threatened, Belford freed. Bourbaki is invading Baden. Our fleets are pointing their cannon upon Hamburg. Their country endangered; their retreat cut off, the sole hope of Bismarck and his trembling legions is to find a refuge in Paris. The increasing fury of the bombardment is a proof of their despair."

"In that case," whispered Savarin to De Brézé, "suppose we send a flag of truce to Versailles with a message from Trochu that, on disgorging their conquests, ceding the left bank of the Rhine, and paying the expenses of the war, Paris, ever magnanimous to the vanquished, will allow the Prussians to retire."

"The Prussians! Retire!" cried Edgar Ferrier, catching the last word and glancing fiercely at Savarin. "What Prussian spy have we among us? Not one of the barbarians shall escape. We have but to dismiss the traitors who have usurped the Government, proclaim the Commune and the rights of labour, and we give birth to a Hercules that even in its cradle can strangle the vipers."

Edgar Ferrier was the sole member of his political party among the group which he thus addressed; but such was the terror which the Communists already began to inspire among the *bourgeoisie* that no one volunteered a reply. Savarin linked his arm in De Brézé's, and prudently drew him off.

"I suspect," said the former, "that we shall soon have worse calamities to endure than the Prussian *obus* and the black loaf. The Communists will have their day."

"I shall be in my grave before then," said De Brézé, in hollow accents. "It is twenty-four hours since I spent my last fifty sous on the purchase of a rat, and I burnt the legs of my bedstead for the fuel by which that quadruped was roasted."

"*Entre nous*, my poor friend, I am much in the same condition," said Savarin, with a ghastly attempt at his old pleasant laugh. "See how I am shrunken! My wife would be unfaithful to the Savarin of her dreams if she accepted a kiss from the slender gallant you behold in me. But I thought you were in the National Guard, and therefore had not to vanish into air."

"I was a National Guard, but I could not stand the hardships; and being above the age, I obtained my exemption. As to pay, I was then too proud to claim my wage of 1 franc 25 centimes. I should not be too proud now. Ah, blessed be heaven! here comes Lemer cier; he owes me a dinner—he shall pay it. *Bon jour*, my dear Frederic! How handsome you look in your *kepi*. Your uniform is brilliantly fresh from the soil of powder. What a contrast to the tatterdemalions of the Line!"

"I fear," said Lemer cier, ruefully, "that my costume will not look so well a day or two hence. I have just had news that will no doubt seem very glorious—in the newspapers. But then newspapers are not subjected to cannon-balls."

"What do you mean?" answered De Brézé.

"I met, as I emerged from my apartment a few minutes ago, that fire-eater Victor de Mauléon, who always contrives to know what passes at headquarters. He told me that preparations are being made for a great sortie. Most probably the announcement will appear in a proclamation to-morrow, and our troops march forth to-morrow night. The National Guard (fools and asses who have been yelling out for decisive action), are to have their wish, and to be placed in the van of battle,—amongst the foremost, the battalion in which I am enrolled.

Should this be our last meeting on earth, say that Frederic Lemercier has finished his part in life with éclat."

"Gallant friend," said De Brézé, feebly seizing him by the arm, "if it be true that thy mortal career is menaced, die as thou hast lived. An honest man leaves no debt unpaid. Thou owest me a dinner."

"Alas! ask of me what is possible. I will give thee three, however, if I survive and regain my *rentes*. But to-day I have not even a mouse to share with Fox."

"Fox lives then?" cried De Brézé, with sparkling hungry eyes.

"Yes. At present he is making the experiment how long an animal can live without food."

"Have mercy upon him, poor beast! Terminate his pangs by a noble death. Let him save thy friends and thyself from starving. For myself alone I do not plead; I am but an amateur in polite literature. But Savarin, the illustrious Savarin—in criticism the French Longinus—in poetry the Parisian Horace—in social life the genius of gaiety in pantaloons,—contemplate his attenuated frame! Shall he perish for want of food while thou hast such superfluity in thy larder? I appeal to thy heart, thy conscience, thy patriotism. What in the eyes of France are a thousand Foxes compared to a single Savarin?"

"At this moment," sighed Savarin, "I could swallow anything, however nauseous, even thy flattery, De Brézé. But, my friend Frederic, thou goest into battle—what will become of Fox if thou fall? Will he not be devoured by strangers. Surely it were a sweeter thought to his faithful heart to furnish a repast to thy friends?—his virtues acknowledged, his memory blest!"

"Thou dost look very lean, my poor Savarin! And how hospitable thou wert when yet plump!" said

Frederic, pathetically. "And certainly, if I live, Fox will starve; if I am slain, Fox will be eaten. Yet, poor Fox, dear Fox, who lay on my breast when I was frostbitten! No; I have not the heart to order him to the spit for you. Urge it not."

"I will save thee that pang," cried De Brézé. "We are close by thy rooms. Excuse me for a moment: I will run in and instruct thy *bonne*."

So saying he sprang forward with an elasticity of step which no one could have anticipated from his previous languor. Frederic would have followed, but Savarin, clung to him, whimpering—"Stay; I shall fall like an empty sack, without the support of thine arm, young hero. Pooh! of course De Brézé is only joking—a pleasant joke. Hist!—a secret: he has moneys, and means to give us once more a dinner at his own cost, pretending that we dine on thy dog. He was planning this when thou camest up. Let him have his joke, and we shall have a *festin de Balthazar*."

"Hein!" said Frederic, doubtfully; "thou art sure he has no designs upon Fox?"

"Certainly not, except in regaling us. Donkey is not bad, but it is 14 francs a lb. A pullet is excellent, but it is 30 francs. Trust to De Brézé; we shall have donkey and pullet, and Fox shall feast upon the remains."

Before Frederic could reply, the two men were jostled and swept on by a sudden rush of a noisy crowd in their rear. They could but distinguish the words—Glorious news—victory—Faidherbe—Chanzy. But these words were sufficient to induce them to join willingly in the rush. They forgot their hunger; they forgot Fox. As they were hurried on, they learned that there was a report of a complete defeat of the



Prussians by Faidherbe near Amiens,—of a still more decided one on the Loire by Chanzy. These generals, with armies flushed with triumph, were pressing on towards Paris to accelerate the destruction of the hated Germans. How the report arose no one exactly knew. All believed it, and were making their way to the Hotel de Ville to hear it formally confirmed.

Alas! before they got there they were met by another crowd returning, dejected but angry. No such news had reached the Government. Chanzy and Faidherbe were no doubt fighting bravely, with every probability of success, but—

The Parisian imagination required no more. "We should always be defeating the enemy," said Savarin, "if there were not always a *but*;" and his audience, who, had he so expressed himself ten minutes before, would have torn him to pieces, now applauded the epigram; and with execrations on Trochu, mingled with many a peal of painful sarcastic laughter, vociferated and dispersed.

As the two friends sauntered back toward the part of the Boulevards on which De Brézé had parted company with them, Savarin quitted Lemer cier suddenly and crossed the street to accost a small party of two ladies and two men who were on their way to the Madeleine. While he was exchanging a few words with them, a young couple, arm in arm, passed by Lemer cier,—the man in the uniform of the National Guard—uniform as unsullied as Frederic's, but with as little of a military air as can well be conceived. His gait was slouching; his head bent downwards. He did not seem to listen to his companion, who was talking with quickness and vivacity, her fair face radiant with smiles. Le-

mercier looked after them as they passed by. "*Sur mon âme*," muttered Frederic to himself, "surely that is *la belle* Julie, and she has got back her truant poet at last!"

While Lemer cier thus soliloquised, Gustave, still looking down, was led across the street by his fair companion, and into the midst of the little group with whom Savarin had paused to speak. Accidentally brushing against Savarin himself, he raised his eyes with a start, about to utter some conventional apology, when Julie felt the arm on which she leant tremble nervously. Before him stood Isaura, the Countess de Vandemar by her side; her two other companions, Raoul and the Abbé Vertpré, a step or two behind.

Gustave uncovered, bowed low, and stood mute and still for a moment, paralysed by surprise and the chill of a painful shame.

Julie's watchful eyes, following his, fixed themselves on the same face. On the instant she divined the truth. She beheld her to whom she had owed months of jealous agony, and over whom, poor child, she thought she had achieved a triumph. But the girl's heart was so instinctively good that the sense of triumph was merged in a sense of compassion. Her rival had lost Gustave. To Julie the loss of Gustave was the loss of all that makes life worth having. On her part, Isaura was moved not only by the beauty of Julie's countenance, but still more by the childlike ingenuousness of its expression.

So, for the first time in their lives, met the child and the step-child of Louise Duval. Each so deserted, each so left alone and inexperienced amid the perils of the world, with fates so different, typifying orders of Womanhood so opposed. Isaura was naturally

the first to break the silence that weighed like a sensible load on all present.

She advanced towards Rameau, with sincere kindness in her look and tone.

"Accept my congratulations," she said, with a grave smile. "Your mother informed me last evening of your nuptials. Without doubt I see Madame Gustave Rameau;"—and she extended her hand towards Julie. The poor Ondine shrank back for a moment, blushing up to her temples. It was the first hand which a woman of spotless character had extended to her since she had lost the protection of Madame Surville. She touched it timidly, humbly, then drew her bridegroom on; and with head more downcast than Gustave, passed through the group without a word.

She did not speak to Gustave till they were out of sight and hearing of those they had left. Then, pressing his arm passionately, she said, "And that is the *demoiselle* thou hast resigned for me!

Do not deny it. I am so glad to have seen her; it has done me so much good. How it has deepened, purified my love for thee! I have but one return to make; but that is my whole life. Thou shalt never have cause to blame me—never—never!"

Savarin looked very grave and thoughtful when he rejoined Lemercier.

"Can I believe my eyes?" said Frederic. "Surely that was Julie Caumartin leaning on Gustave Rameau's arm! And had he the assurance, so accompanied, to salute Madame de Vandemar, and Mademoiselle Cicogna, to whom I understood he was affianced? Nay, did I not see Mademoiselle shake hands with the Ondine? or am I under one of the illusions which famine is said to engender in the brain?"

"I have not strength now to answer all these interrogatives. I have a story to tell; but I keep it for dinner. Let us hasten to thy apartment. De Brézé is doubtless there waiting us."

#### CHAPTER XIV.

Unprescient of the perils that awaited him, absorbed in the sense of existing discomfort, cold, and hunger, Fox lifted his mournful visage from his master's dressing-gown, in which he had encoiled his shivering frame, on the entrance of De Brézé and the *concierge* of the house in which Lemercier had his apartment. Recognising the *Vicomte* as one of his master's acquaintances, he checked the first impulse that prompted him to essay a feeble bark, and permitted himself, with a petulant whine, to be extracted from his covering, and held in the arms of the murderous visitor.

"*Dieu des dieux!*" ejaculated De

Brézé, "how light the poor beast has become!" Here he pinched the sides and thighs of the victim. "Still," he said, "there is some flesh yet on these bones. You may grill the paws, *fricasser* the shoulders, and roast the rest. The *rognons* and the head accept for yourself as a perquisite." Here he transferred Fox to the arms of the *concierge*, adding, "*Vite au besogne, mon ami.*"

"Yes, Monsieur. I must be quick about it while my wife is absent. She has a *faiblesse* for the brute. He must be on the spit before she returns."

"Be it so; and on the table in



an hour—five o'clock precisely—I am famished."

The *concierge* disappeared with Fox. De Brézé then amused himself by searching into Frederic's cupboards and *buffets*, from which he produced a cloth and utensils necessary for the repast. These he arranged with great neatness, and awaited in patience the moment of participation in the feast.

The hour of five had struck before Savarin and Frederic entered

the *salon*; and at their sight De Brézé dashed to the staircase and called out to the *concierge* to serve the dinner.

Frederic, though unconscious of the Thyestean nature of the banquet, still looked round for the dog; and, not perceiving him, began to call out, "Fox! Fox! where hast thou hidden thyself?"

"Tranquillise yourself," said De Brézé. "Do not suppose that I have not . . . .

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NOTE BY THE AUTHOR'S SON.\*

The hand that wrote thus far has left unwritten the last scene of the tragedy of poor Fox. In the deep where Prospero has dropped his wand are now irrevocably buried the humour and the pathos of this cynophagous banquet. One detail of it, however, which the author imparted to his son, may here be faintly indicated. Let the sympathising reader recognise all that is dramatic in the conflict between hunger and affection; let him recall to mind the lachrymose loving-kindness of his own post-prandial emotions after blissfully breaking some fast, less mercilessly prolonged, we will hope, than that of these besieged banqueters; and then, though unaided by the fancy which conceived so quaint a situation, he may perhaps imagine what tearful tenderness would fill the eyes of the kind-hearted Frederic, as they contemplate the well-picked bones of his sacrificed favourite on the platter before him; which he pushes away, sighing, "Ah, poor Fox! how he would have enjoyed those bones!"

The chapter immediately following this one also remains unfinished. It was not intended to close the narrative thus left uncompleted; but of those many and so various works which have not unworthily associated with almost every department of literature the name of a single English writer, it is CHAPTER THE LAST. Had the author lived to finish it, he would doubtless have added to his Iliad of the Siege of Paris its most epic episode, by here describing the mighty combat between those two princes of the Parisian Bourse, the magnanimous Duplessis and the redoubtable Louvier. Amongst the few other pages of the book which have been left unwritten, we must also reckon with regret some page descriptive of the reconciliation between Graham Vane and Isaura Cicogna; but, fortunately for the satisfaction of every reader who may have followed thus far the fortunes of 'The Parisians,' all that our curiosity is chiefly interested to learn has been recorded in the *Envoi*, which was written before the completion of the novel.

We know not, indeed, what has become of these two Parisian types of a Beauty not of Holiness, the poor vain Poet of the *Pavé*, and the good-hearted Ondine of the Gutter. It is obvious, from the absence of all allusion to them in Lemer cier's letter to Vane, that they had passed out of the narrative before that letter was written. We must suppose the catastrophe of their fates to have been described, in some preceding chapter, by the author himself; who would assuredly not have left M. Gustave Rameau in permanent possession of his ill-merited and ill-ministered fortune. That French representative of the appropriately popular poetry of modern ideas, which prefers "the roses and raptures of vice" to "the lilies and languors of virtue," cannot have been irredeemably reconciled by the sweet savours of the domestic *pot-au-feu*, even when spiced with pungent whiffs of repudiated disreputability, to any selfish betrayal of the cause of universal social emancipation from the personal proprieties. If poor Julie Caumartin has perished in the siege of Paris, with all the grace of her self-wrought redemption still upon her, we shall doubtless deem her fate a happier one than any she could have found in prolonged existence as Madame Rameau; and a certain modicum of this world's good things will, in that case, have been rescued for worthier employment by Graham Vane. To that assurance nothing but Lemer cier's description of the fate of Victor de Mauléon (which will be found in the *Envoi*) need be added for the satisfaction of our sense of poetic justice: and, if on the mimic stage, from which they now disappear, all these puppets have rightly played their parts in the drama of an empire's fall, each will have helped "to point a moral" as well as to "adorn a tale." *Valete et plaudite!*  
L.

## CHAPTER THE LAST.

Among the refugees which the *convoy* from Versailles disgorged on the Paris station were two men, who, in pushing through the crowd, came suddenly face to face with each other.

"Aha! *Bon jour*, M. Duplessis," said a burly voice.

"*Bon jour*, M. Louvier," replied Duplessis.

"How long have you left Bretagne?"

"On the day that the news of the armistice reached it, in order to be able to enter Paris the first day its gates were open. And you—where have you been?"

"In London."

"Ah! in London!" said Duplessis, paling. "I knew I had an enemy there."

"Enemy! I? Bah! my dear

Monsieur. What makes you think me your enemy?"

"I remember your threats."

"*A propos* of Rochebriant. By the way, when would it be convenient to you and the dear Marquis to let me into prompt possession of that property? You can no longer pretend to buy it as a *dot* for Made-moiselle Valerie."

"I know not that yet. It is true that all the financial operations attempted by my agent in London have failed. But I may recover myself yet, now that I re-enter Paris. In the mean time, we have still six months before us; for, as you will find—if you know it not already—the interest due to you has been lodged with Messrs — of —, and you cannot foreclose, even if the law did not take into



consideration the national calamities as between debtor and creditor."

"Quite true. But if you cannot buy the property it must pass into my hands in a very short time. And you and the Marquis had

better come to an amicable arrangement with me. *A propos*, I read in the 'Times' newspaper that Alain was among the wounded in the sortie of December."

"Yes; we learnt that through a pigeon-post. We were afraid . . .

#### L'ENVOI.

The intelligent reader will perceive that the story I relate is virtually closed with the preceding chapter; though I rejoice to think that what may be called its plot does not find its *dénouement* amidst the crimes and the frenzy of the *Guerre des Communeaux*. Fit subjects these, indeed, for the social annalist in times to come. When crimes that outrage humanity have their motive or their excuse in principles that demand the demolition of all upon which the civilisation of Europe has its basis—worship, property, and marriage—in order to reconstruct a new civilisation adapted to a new humanity, it is scarcely possible for the serenest contemporary to keep his mind in that state of abstract reasoning with which Philosophy deduces from some past evil some existent good. For my part, I believe that throughout the whole known history of mankind, even in epochs when reason is most misled and conscience most perverted, there runs visible, though fine and threadlike, the chain of destiny, which has its roots in the throne of an All-wise and an All-good; that in the wildest illusions by which multitudes are frenzied, there may be detected gleams of prophetic truths; that in the fiercest crimes which, like the disease of an epidemic, characterise a peculiar epoch under abnormal circumstances, there might be found instincts or aspirations towards

some social virtues to be realised ages afterwards by happier generations, all tending to save man from despair of the future, were the whole society to unite for the joyless hour of his race in the abjuration of soul and the denial of God, because all irresistibly establishing that yearning towards an unseen future which is the leading attribute of soul, evincing the government of a divine Thought which evolves out of the discords of one age the harmonies of another, and, in the world within us as in the world without, enforces upon every unclouded reason the distinction between Providence and Chance.

The account subjoined may suffice to say all that rests to be said of those individuals in whose fate, apart from the events or personages that belong to graver history, the reader of this work may have conceived an interest. It is translated from the letter of Frederic Lemerrier to Graham Vane, dated June —, a month after the defeat of the Communists.

"Dear and distinguished Englishman, whose name I honour but fail to pronounce, accept my cordial thanks for your interests in such remains of Frederic Lemerrier as yet survive the ravages of famine, Equality, Brotherhood, Petroleum, and the Rights of Labour. I did not desert my Paris when M. Thiers, '*parmula non bene relictâ*,' led his sagacious friends and his valiant troops to the groves of

Versailles, and confided to us unarmed citizens the preservation of order and property from the insurgents whom he left in possession of our forts and cannon. I felt spellbound by the interest of the *sinistre melodrame*, with its quick succession of scenic effects and the metropolis of the world for its stage. Taught by experience, I did not aspire to be an actor; and even as a spectator, I took care neither to hiss nor applaud. Imitating your happy England, I observed a strict neutrality; and, safe myself from danger, left my best friends to the care of the gods.

"As to political questions, I dare not commit myself to a conjecture. At this *rouge et noir* table, all I can say is, that whichever card turns up, it is either a red or a black one. One gamester gains for the moment by the loss of the other; the table eventually ruins both.

"No one believes that the present form of government can last; every one differs as to that which can. Raoul de Vandemar is immovably convinced of the restoration of the Bourbons. Savarin is meditating a new journal devoted to the cause of the Count of Paris. De Brézé and the old Count de Passy, having in turn espoused and opposed every previous form of government, naturally go in for a perfectly novel experiment, and are for constitutional dictatorship under the Duc d'Aumale, which he is to hold at his own pleasure, and ultimately resign to his nephew the Count, under the mild title of a constitutional king;—that is, if it ever suits the pleasure of a dictator to depose himself. To me this seems the wildest of notions. If the Duc's administration were successful, the French would insist on keeping it; and if the uncle were unsuccessful, the nephew would not have a chance. Duplessis retains

his faith in the Imperial dynasty, and that Imperialist party is much stronger than it appears on the surface. So many of the *bourgeoisie* recall with a sigh eighteen years of prosperous trade; so many of the military officers, so many of the civil officials, identify their career with the Napoleonic favour; and so many of the Priesthood, abhorring the Republic, always liable to pass into the hands of those who assail religion,—unwilling to admit the claim of the Orleanists, are at heart for the Empire.

"But I will tell you one secret. I and all the quiet folks like me (we are more numerous than any one violent faction) are willing to accept any form of government by which we have the best chance of keeping our coats on our backs. *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* are gone quite out of fashion; and Mademoiselle ——— has abandoned her great chant of the Marseillaise, and is drawing tears from enlightened audiences by her pathetic delivery of '*O Richard! O mon roi!*'

"Now about the other friends of whom you ask for news.

"Wonders will never cease. Louvier and Duplessis are no longer deadly rivals. They have become sworn friends, and are meditating a great speculation in common, to commence as soon as the Prussian debt is paid off. Victor de Mauléon brought about this reconciliation in a single interview during the brief interregnum between the Peace and the *Guerre des Communeaux*. You know how sternly Louvier was bent upon seizing Alain de Rochebriant's estates. Can you conceive the true cause? Can you imagine it possible that a hardened money-maker like Louvier should ever allow himself to be actuated, one way or the other, by the romance of a sentimental wrong? Yet so it was. It seems that many years ago he was desper-



ately in love with a girl who disappeared from his life, and whom he believed to have been seduced by the late Marquis de Rochebriant. It was in revenge for this supposed crime that he had made himself the principal mortgagee of the late Marquis; and, visiting the sins of the father on the son, had, under the infernal disguise of friendly interest, made himself sole mortgagee to Alain, upon terms apparently the most generous. The demon soon showed his *griffe*, and was about to foreclose, when Duplessis came to Alain's relief; and Rochebriant was to be Valérie's *dot* on her marriage with Alain. The Prussian war, of course, suspended all such plans, pecuniary and matrimonial. Duplessis, whose resources were terribly crippled by the war, attempted operations in London with a view of raising the sum necessary to pay off the mortgage;—found himself strangely frustrated and baffled. Louvier was in London, and defeated his rival's agent in every speculation. It became impossible for Duplessis to redeem the mortgage. The two men came to Paris with the peace. Louvier determined both to seize the Breton lands and to complete the ruin of Duplessis; when he learned from De Mauléon that he had spent half his life in a baseless illusion;—that Alain's father was innocent of the crime for which his son was to suffer; and Victor, with that strange power over men's minds which was so peculiar to him, talked Louvier into mercy if not into repentance. In short, the mortgage is to be paid off by instalments at the convenience of Duplessis. Alain's marriage with Valérie is to take place in a few weeks. The *fournisseurs* are already gone to fit up the old chateau for the bride, and Louvier is invited to the wedding.

"I have all this story from Alain,

and from Duplessis himself. I tell the tale as 'twas told to me, with all the gloss of sentiment upon its woof. But between ourselves, I am too Parisian not to be sceptical as to the unalloyed amiability of sudden conversions. And I suspect that Louvier was no longer in a condition to indulge in the unprofitable whim of turning rural seigneur. He had sunk large sums and incurred great liabilities in the new street to be called after his name; and that street has been twice ravaged, first by the Prussian siege and next by the *Guerre des Communeaux*; and I can detect many reasons why Louvier should deem it prudent not only to withdraw from the Rochebriant seizure, and make sure of peacefully recovering the capital lent on it, but establishing joint interest and *quasi* partnership with a financier so brilliant and successful as Armand Duplessis has hitherto been.

"Alain himself is not quite recovered from his wound, and is now at Rochebriant, nursed by his aunt and Valérie. I have promised to visit him next week. Raoul de Vandemar is still at Paris with his mother, saying there is no place where one Christian man can be of such service. The old Count declines to come back, saying there is no place where a philosopher can be in such danger.

"I reserve as my last communication, in reply to your questions, that which is the gravest. You say that you saw in the public journals brief notice of the assassination of Victor de Mauléon; and you ask for such authentic particulars as I can give of that event, and of the motives of the assassin.

"I need not, of course, tell you how bravely the poor Vicomte behaved throughout the siege; but he made many enemies among the

worst members of the National Guard by the severity of his discipline ; and had he been caught by the mob the same day as Clement Thomas, who committed the same offence, would have certainly shared the fate of that general. Though elected a *député*, he remained at Paris a few days after Thiers & Co. left it, in the hope of persuading the party of Order, including then no small portion of the National Guards, to take prompt and vigorous measures to defend the city against the Communists. Indignant at their pusillanimity, he then escaped to Versailles. There he more than confirmed the high reputation he had acquired during the siege, and impressed the ablest public men with the belief that he was destined to take a very leading part in the strife of party. When the Versailles troops entered Paris, he was, of course, among them in command of a battalion.

"He escaped safe through that horrible war of barricades, though no man more courted danger. He inspired his men with his own courage. It was not till the revolt was quenched on the evening of the 28th May that he met his death. The Versailles soldiers, naturally exasperated, were very prompt in seizing and shooting at once every passenger who looked like a foe. Some men under De Mauléon had seized upon one of these victims, and were hurrying him into the next street for execution, when, catching sight of the Vicomte, he screamed out, 'Lebeau, save me!'

"At that cry De Mauléon rushed forward, arrested his soldiers, cried, 'This man is innocent—a harmless physician. I answer for him.' As he thus spoke, a wounded Communist, lying in the gutter amidst a heap of the slain, dragged himself up, reeled toward De Mauléon,

plunged a knife between his shoulders, and dropped down dead.

"The Vicomte was carried into a neighbouring house, from all the windows of which the tricolor was suspended ; and the *Médecin* whom he had just saved from summary execution examined and dressed his wound. The Vicomte lingered for more than an hour, but expired in the effort to utter some words, the sense of which those about him endeavoured in vain to seize.

"It was from the *Médecin* that the name of the assassin and the motive for the crime were ascertained. The miscreant was a Red Republican and Socialist named Armand Monnier. He had been a very skilful workman, and earning, as such, high wages. But he thought fit to become an active revolutionary politician, first led into schemes for upsetting the world by the existing laws of marriage, which had inflicted on him one woman who ran away from him, but being still legally his wife forbade him to marry another woman with whom he lived, and to whom he seems to have been passionately attached.

"These schemes, however, he did not put into any positive practice till he fell in with a certain Jean Lebeau, who exercised great influence over him, and by whom he was admitted into one of the secret revolutionary societies which had for their object the overthrow of the Empire. After that time his head became turned. The fall of the Empire put an end to the society he had joined : Lebeau dissolved it. During the siege Monnier was a sort of leader among the *ouvriers* ; but as it advanced and famine commenced, he contracted the habit of intoxication. His children died of cold and hunger. The woman he lived with followed them to the grave. Then he seems to have be-



come a ferocious madman, and to have been implicated in the worst crimes of the Communists. He cherished a wild desire of revenge against this Jean Lebeau, to whom he attributed all his calamities, and by whom, he said, his brother had been shot in the sortie of December.

“Here comes the strange part of the story. This Jean Lebeau is alleged to have been one and the same person with Victor de Mauléon. The *Médecin* I have named, and who is well known in Belleville and Montmartre as the *Médecin des Pauvres*, confesses that he belonged to the secret society organised by Lebeau; that the disguise the Vicomte assumed was so complete, that he should not have recognised his identity with the conspirator but for an accident. During the later time of the bombardment, he, the *Médecin des Pauvres*, was on the eastern ramparts, and his attention was suddenly called to a man mortally wounded by the splinter of a shell. While examining the nature of the wound, De Mauléon, who was also on the ramparts, came to the spot. The dying man said: ‘M. le Vicomte, you owe me a service. My name is Marc le Roux. I was on the police before the war. When M. de Mauléon reassumed his station, and was making himself obnoxious to the Emperor, I might have denounced him as Jean Lebeau, the conspirator. I did not. The siege has reduced me to want. I have a child at home—a pet. Don’t let her starve.’ ‘I will see to her,’ said the Vicomte. Before we could get the man into the ambulance-cart he expired.

“The *Médecin* who told this story I had the curiosity to see myself, and cross-question. I own I believe his statement. Whether De Mauléon did or did not conspire against a fallen dynasty, to which

he owed no allegiance, can little if at all injure the reputation he has left behind of a very remarkable man—of great courage and great ability—who might have had a splendid career if he had survived. But, as Savarin says truly, the first bodies which the car of revolution crushes down are those which first harness themselves to it.

“Among De Mauléon’s papers is the programme of a constitution fitted for France. How it got into Savarin’s hands I know not. De Mauléon left no will, and no relations came forward to claim his papers. I asked Savarin to give me the heads of the plan, which he did. They are as follows:—

“‘The American republic is the sole one worth studying, for it has lasted. The causes of its duration are in the checks to democratic fickleness and disorder. 1st, No law affecting the Constitution can be altered without the consent of two-thirds of Congress. 2d, To counteract the impulses natural to a popular Assembly chosen by universal suffrage, the greater legislative powers, especially in foreign affairs, are vested in the Senate, which has even executive as well as legislative functions. 3d, The chief of the State, having elected his government, can maintain it independent of hostile majorities in either Assembly.

“‘These three principles of safety to form the basis of any new constitution for France.

“‘For France it is essential that the chief magistrate, under whatever title he assume, should be as irresponsible as an English sovereign. Therefore he should not preside at his councils; he should not lead his armies. The day for personal government is gone, even in Prussia. The safety for order in a State is, that when things go wrong, the Ministry changes, the

State remains the same. In Europe, republican institutions are safer where the chief magistrate is hereditary than where elective.'

"Savarin says these axioms are carried out at length, and argued with great ability.

"I am very grateful for your proffered hospitalities in England. Some day I shall accept them—viz., whenever I decide on domestic life, and the calm of the conjugal *foyer*. I have a *penchant* for an English *Mees*, and am not exacting as to the *dot*. Thirty thousand livres sterling would satisfy me—a trifle, I believe, to you rich islanders."

"Meanwhile, I am naturally compelled to make up for the miseries of that horrible siege. Certain moralising journals tell us that, sobered by misfortunes, the Parisians are going to turn over a new leaf, become studious and reflective, despise pleasure and luxury, and live like German professors. Don't believe a word of it. My conviction is that, whatever may be said as to our frivolity, extravagance, &c., under the Empire, we shall be just the same under any form of government—the bravest, the most timid, the most ferocious, the kindest-hearted, the most irrational, the most intelligent, the most contradictory, the most consistent people whom Jove, taking counsel of Venus and the Graces, Mars and the Furies, ever created for the de-

light and terror of the world ;—in a word, the Parisians.—Votre tout dévoué, FREDERIC LEMERCIER."

It is a lovely noon on the bay of Sorrento, towards the close of the autumn of 1871 : upon the part of the craggy shore, to the left of the town; on which her first perusal of the loveliest poem in, which the romance of Christian heroism has ever combined elevation of thought with silvery delicacies of speech, had charmed her childhood, reclined the young bride of Graham Vane. They were in the first month of their marriage. Isaura had not yet recovered from the effects of all that had preyed upon her life, from the hour in which she had deemed that in her pursuit of fame she had lost the love that had coloured her genius and inspired her dreams, to that in which . . .

The physicians consulted agreed in insisting on her passing the winter in a southern climate ; and after their wedding, which took place in Florence, they thus came to Sorrento.

As Isaura is seated on the small smoothed rocklet, Graham reclines at her feet, his face upturned to hers with an inexpressible wistful anxiety in his impassioned tenderness. "You are sure you feel better and stronger since we have been here?"



THE STORY OF VALENTINE;  
AND HIS BROTHER.

## PART I.—CHAPTER I.

Two ladies were seated in a great dim room, partially illuminated by fits and starts with gleams of fire-light. The large windows showed a pale dark sky, in which twilight was giving place to night, and across which the brown branches of the trees, rough with the buds of March, tossed wildly in a hurricane of wind, burdened with intermittent blasts of rain—rain that dashed fiercely against the windows a handful at a time, then ceased till some new cloud was ready to discharge its angry shower. Something fiercely personal and furious was in the storm. It looked and felt like something not addressed to the world in general, but aimed individually by some angry spirit of the elements at the people who lived here high up above the brawling Esk amid the brown wintry woods at Rosseraig House.

The drawing-room was large, lofty, and full of old-fashioned furniture which would have enchanted a connoisseur. The two ladies, who were its only occupants, were scarcely discernible at first, though the firelight, gleaming about among the still life, caught here a green reflection from a wonderful cabinet of rarest Verni-Martin, and there entangled itself in the bevelled sides of a strange old mirror, used to reflecting wizards. It was more easy to make out these accessories of existence than it was to identify the two voices which occupied and reigned over this still and darkling chamber. They were in one corner of the room near the fire; one, the prevailing voice, was soft but

strong, with the vigour in it of mature life, just roughened here and there by a touch of age, which gave it an *aigre doux* of distinct character—and came from an ample dark shadow in a great chair, turned towards the fire. The other, which gave forth only monosyllabic sounds of assent or wonder, sweet and tender, but feeble, belonged to a smaller person near the first, and facing her—whose countenance, turned towards the window, showed like a pale whiteness in the dark. This was the central light, the highest tone in the picture, except the pale gleaming of the sky from the windows, and the fitful red flash from the fire.

“Richard’s story,” said the stronger voice, “cannot be supposed to be very interesting to any but ourselves. If it is for mere curiosity, Mary——”

“Curiosity!”—there was a tone of reproach in the soft repetition—a reproach and an appeal.

“That was unkind. I did not mean it. I meant interest, friendship; but Mary, Mary, friendship is weak, and interest a poor bit feeble echo of feeling to them that are all bound up in one life as I have been in my son.”

Here there was a little pause, and then the younger voice answered, faltering, “I have known him all my life. I have seen few men but him——”

This was preliminary to the story which old Lady Eskside had begun to tell when I opened to you, gentle reader, the door of this great dim room. She was deep in it by

the time we shadows entered, among the shadows, to listen. And most of us can figure to ourselves what a mother would be likely to say of her only child—the child not of her youth even, which puts a kind of equality between mother and son, and brings them together, as it were, upon one table-land of life, sooner or later—but the child of her mature age, and therefore always a child to her. What she said of him I need not repeat. The reader will make acquaintance with the man for himself, a different creature from the man as seen through his mother's eyes.

"Perhaps it is not a thing to remark to you," said the old lady, who was old enough not only to retain a Scotch accent, but to use occasionally a word peculiar to the north,—“but, Mary, you are not a bit girlie unacquainted with the world. You will recognise Richard in this that he married the woman.—God forgive me! I'm sorely tempted to think sometimes that vice is less deadly for this world than virtue. You know what most men would have done—they would have taken the girl as they would have gathered a flower, and neither she nor one belonging to her knew better, nor expected better; but my Richard, God bless him! was a fool, Mary,—he was a fool! His father says so, and what can I say different? He has always been a fool in that way, thank God! He married the woman; and then he sent to me when it was all over and nothing could be mended, to come and see, for God's sake, what was to be done.”

“And you went?”

“I went after a struggle; I could not thole the creature,—the very name of her was odious to me. It was a ridiculous name—a play-actor's name. They called her Altamira. What do you think of

that for Richard's wife? I thought she was some shopkeeper's daughter—some scheming, dressing, half-bred woman that had made her scheme to marry him because his father was Lord Eskside—though, heaven knows, it's a poor enough lordship when all's said. Perhaps we women are too apt to take this view; naturally, when such a thing happens, we think it the woman's fault—the woman's doing. But, Mary, Mary, when I saw the girl——”

“You freed her,” said the other, with a sighing sound in her low voice, “from the blame?”

“The blame!” cried the old lady, with some impatience; then, sinking her voice low, she said hurriedly—“the girl was no shopkeeper's daughter, not even a cottage lass, nor out of a ploughman's house, or a weaver's house, or the lowest you can think. She was out of no house at all—she was a tramp. Mary, do you know what that means?—a creature hanging about the roads and fields, at fairs and races, wherever the roughest, and the wildest, and the most miserable congregate—that was Richard's wife——”

“Oh, Lady Eskside!”

“You may well say, Oh! As for me, if I had ever fainted in my life I would have fainted then. She was a beautiful creature; but the sight of her brought a sickness to my very heart. She was like a wild hunted thing, frightened to death for me and everything that was civilised—looking out of her wild black eyes to see how she could escape—shrinking back not to be touched as if she thought I would give her a blow. Blame! you might as well blame a deer that it let itself be taken, poor, bonnie, panting, senseless thing! I blamed nobody, Mary; I was just appalled, neither more nor less, at the man's folly that had done it. Think of a



son of mine having so little command of himself! The madness of it! for it was no question of making a lady of her, a woman that could take his mother's place. She had to be tamed first out of her gipsy ways, tamed like a wild beast, and taught to live in a house, and wear decent clothes as she had never done in her life."

A low cry of dismay and wonder came from the listener's lips, and a strange pang which nobody knew of went through her heart—a pang indescribable, mingled of misery, humiliation, and a kind of guilty and bitter pride; guilty, though she was innocent enough. This was his choice, she said to herself; and that sharp and stinging contempt—more painful to herself than to the object of it—which a woman sometimes permits herself to feel for a man who has slighted her, shot through the gentlest soul in the world.

"I cannot tell you," said Lady Eskside, her voice sinking low so that her companion had to stoop forward to hear, "all that I went through. She broke away from us, and got back to her people more than once. Our ways were misery and bondage to her. At first she had to be dressed like a child—watched like a child. Her husband had no influence over her, and she was frightened for me: the moment she was out of our sight her whole mind was busy with schemes to get away."

"But what reason—what motive——" began the other, faltering.

"None," said Lady Eskside. "Listen, Mary; there was one thing. She was good, as people call good; there was no wickedness in her, as a woman. What wife meant, in any higher sense, she was ignorant of; but there was no harm—no harm. Always remem-

ber this, whatever may happen, and whatever you may hear. I say it—Richard's mother—that can have no motive to shield her. She wanted her freedom, nothing more. She was not an ill woman; nothing bad—in that way—was in her head. She would have put her knife into the man who spoke lightly to her, as soon as look at him. She was proud in her way of being Richard's wife. She felt the difference it made between her and others. But she was like a wild animal, or a bird. She would not be caged, and there was too deep an ignorance in her to learn. There was no foundation to build upon—neither ambition, nor pride, nor any feeling that the like of us expect to find."

"And was there no love?" The voice that made this inquiry trembled and had a thrill in it of feeling so mingled as to be indescribable—bitterness, wonder, pity, and a sense of contrast more overwhelming than all.

Lady Eskside did not reply at once. "Often and often I've asked myself that question," she said at length; "Was there love? How can I tell? There are different kinds of love, Mary. You and I even would love very differently, let alone you and her. With you there would be no thought of anything but of the person loved——"

"I am not at all in question, Lady Eskside," said the other, with the strangest delicate haughtiness.

"I beg your pardon," said the old lady, quickly. "You are right, my dear; there is no question of you. But still there are different kinds of love. Some think only of the person loved, as I said; but some are roused up into a kind of fierce consciousness of themselves through their very love. They feel their own individuality not less but more

in consequence of it. This was that poor creature's way. Mixed with her wild cravings for the freedom she had been used to, and the wild outdoor life she had been used to, I think she had a sort of half-crazy feeling how unlike Richard she was ; and this became all the stronger when I came. My dear," said Lady Eskside, suddenly, "the most untrained woman feels what another woman thinks of her far more than she feels any man's criticism. I have thought and thought on this for years, and perhaps I put my own thoughts into her mind ; but I cannot help fancying that sometimes, though she did not understand me in the least, poor thing, she caught a glimpse of herself through my eyes ; and what with this and what with her longing to be out of doors, she grew desperate, and then she ran away."

The listener made no reply. I don't think she cared to hear any excuse made for the wild woman who was Richard's wife—whom Richard had chosen instead of any other, and who had thus justified his choice.

"I stayed as long as I could, and tried all I could," Lady Eskside continued, "and then there came a time when I felt it was better for me to go away. I told Richard so, and I advised him to take her abroad—where she would have nobody to fly to. And so he did, and wandered about with her everywhere. I can't think but what she must have made some advances, in sense, at least, while they were so much together ; but it takes a long time to tame a savage ; it takes a long time to graft a new stock upon a wild tree."

"And have you never seen her again?"

"I saw her when her children were born. She was so far tamed

then by weakness, and by the natural restraint of the circumstances," said Lady Eskside, "that I hoped she might be changed altogether. And she would talk a little—not so much as that one could find out how her mind was working—but yet a little—enough to swear by ; and her voice was changed. It lost its wild sound and took finer modulations. You know how particular Richard always was in all his ways—you remember his voice?"

The other drew back her chair a little. Somehow the sudden reference struck her like an arrow through and through. It was not her fault. For years she had been trying to think of Richard—as she ought to think—not too much, nor too kindly, but with gentle indifference and friendship ; no, not indifference ; old long friendship which may be permitted to remember. "Like his sister," she had often said to herself. But somehow these sudden words, "You remember his voice," struck poor Mary at unawares. They brought her down to the very ground. She tried with a choking sobbing sensation to get out the word "Yes." Remember it ! She seemed to hear it and nothing else, till her head ached and swam, and there was a ringing in her ears.

"Ah !" Lady Eskside paused, with a wondering sense that something was going on in the dark more potent than mere interest in her story. But after a while, as even a story which is one's own takes a stronger hold upon one than the emotion of another, however deep—she recommenced, going back to herself. "Her voice had changed wonderfully. She spoke almost like an educated person—that gave me great hope. I thought, what with the children and what with this opening of new life in herself, that everything would be changed ; and my heart was moved to her. When



I left I kissed the children, and for the first time I kissed her; and I promised to send her a nurse, an excellent nurse I knew of, and came home quite happy. You recollect my coming home, and how proud I was of the twins—the darlings! Oh, Mary, Mary! little did I know——”

Mary put out her hand and took that of her old friend. She was too much moved herself to say anything. From this point she had a faint knowledge of the story, as everybody had.

“The next I heard was that she had disappeared,” said the old lady; —“disappeared totally, taking the babies with her. Richard went with me so far on my way home, and while he was absent his wife disappeared. There is no other word for it; she disappeared, and no one has ever heard of her again. Oh, Mary, what news for us all! There had been some gipsy wanderers, some of her own class, about the place, we found out afterwards; and whether they carried her off, or she went of her own will, nobody knows. Sometimes I have thought she must have been carried away, but then they would not have taken the children; and sometimes I have blamed myself, and thought that what I said about the nurse may have frightened her—God knows. We sought her everywhere, Mary, as you may suppose. I went myself up and down over all the country, and Richard went to America, and I cannot tell you where. We had the police employed, and every sort of person we could think of; but we have never heard any more of her to this day.”

“Nor of the children?” said Mary, drawing closer and holding still more tenderly her old friend’s hand.

“Nor of the children—two bonnie boys—oh, my dear, two lovely

boys!” cried the old lady, with a sob. “I never saw such sweet children. You may fancy all I had said to my old lord when I came home, about them: one was to have my property such as it is, and the other the Eskside lands. A single heir would have been better, Lord Eskside said, in his way, you know—but he was as proud as I was. Two boys!—no fear of the old house dying out. We began to plan out the new wing we have always thought of building. Oh, Mary, now you will understand how I can never laugh when the gentlemen make a joke with my poor old lord about the new wing!”

“Dear Lady Eskside! but you must not—you must not break down—for his sake.”

“No, I must never break down; and if I would I could not,” said the old lady; “it’s no my nature. I must keep up. I must stand firm till my last day. But, Mary, though it is my nature, I have to pay for it, as one pays for everything. Oh, the weary nights I have lain awake thinking I heard her wandering round the house, thinking I heard her at the window trying to get in. She knew nothing about Rosseraig—nothing; but, strange enough, I always think of her coming here. When the wind’s blowing as it blows to-night, when the leaves are falling in autumn—oh, Mary, have you never heard a sound like steps going round and round the house?”

“It is only the leaves falling,” said Mary; and then she added, suddenly, “I have heard everything that the heart hears.”

“And that’s more than the ears ever hear tell of,” said the old lady; “but oh, to live for years and never hear that without thinking it may be them—never to see beggar bairns on a roadside without thinking it may be them—to go watch-

ing and waiting and wondering through your life, starting at every noise, trembling at every sudden sound—God help us! what is that—what is that?" she cried, suddenly rising to her feet.

"Oh, Lady Eskside!" cried the other, rising too, and grasping her hand with a nervous shudder; "it is nothing—nothing but the storm."

The old lady dropped heavily into her seat again. "Sometimes I cannot bear it," she cried—"sometimes I cannot bear it! I get half-crazed at every sound."

"The wind is very high," said Mary, soothing her, "and the Esk is running wild over the linn, and the storm tearing the trees. It must be the equinoctial gales. If you only heard them as we do, roaring and raging over the sea!"

For a few minutes the two ladies sat quite still holding each other's hands. The storm outside was wild enough to impose silence upon those within. The trees were tossed about as if in an agony, against the pale whiteness of the sky; now and then a deeper note would come into the tumult of sound, the hoarse roar of the river, which grew rapidly into a torrent at the foot of the hill; and then the wind would rush, like the avenging spirit through the bleeding wood in the Inferno, tearing off the limbs of the trees, which shrieked and cried in unavailing torment. The last lingering rays of twilight had disappeared out of the sky, the last gleams of firelight were sinking too—even the mirrors had sunk out of sight upon the walls, and nothing but the large windows filled with the mournful pallor of the sky, and Mary's pale face, a similar spot of whiteness, were even partially visible. After this story, and while they sat silent, conscious of the strange stillness within, and commotion outside, was it their

imaginings that represented to them another sound striking into the roar of the storm? Lady Eskside did not start again as she had done before, but she grasped Mary's hand tightly; while Mary, for her part, sat bolt-upright in her chair, thinking to herself that it must be imagination, that it was a mere trick of excitement which filled her ears with echoes of fanciful knockings. Who could be knocking at this hour? or how could such a sound be heard even in the onslaught of the storm?

What was it? what could it be? Now, was that the forlorn peal of a bell? and now a gust of cold air as if the door in opening had admitted the storm in person, which swept through the house like a mountain stream; and now a wild dash and clang as if the same door had closed again, shaking the very walls. Tighter and tighter Lady Eskside grasped Mary's hand. They said nothing to each other, except a faint "It is nothing—it is fancy," which came from Mary's lips unawares, and under her breath. Was it fancy? Was it some curious reverberation through the air of the countless anxieties which the old lady had hushed in her mind for years, but which until now she had never betrayed? For the next few minutes they heard their own hearts beating loud over the storm, and then there came another sound ludicrous in its methodical calm, which startled them still more than the sounds they had supposed themselves to hear.

"Something has happened, Mary!" cried Lady Eskside, withdrawing her grasp and wringing her hands. "Something has happened! some one has arrived and Harding is coming to let us know."

"He is coming to light the lamps," said Mary, making one desperate effort to throw off the supersti-



tious impression ; and she laughed. The laugh sounded something terrible, full of mockery and contempt in the midst of the always resounding storm ; the echo of it seemed to breathe all round the room, calling forth diabolical echoes. In the midst of these Harding came solemnly into the room. He was an elderly man, who had been many years in the house, and was deeply impressed by the solemnity of his own position. He came in without any light, and stood invisible at the door, another voice and nothing else.

“My lady,” said Harding, solemnly, “something has happened—something as is very mysterious and we can’t understand. Would it be a great trouble to your ladyship if we was to ask you to come down-stairs ?”

She had sprung up nervously at his first words. She rushed now before him down-stairs—unable to reply, unable to question—as light as a girl of twenty, though three times that age—followed trembling by the other, who was not half so old, nor half so full of life as she.

## CHAPTER II.

Before I can fully explain what happened next, and what Lady Eskside saw when she rushed down-stairs, I am obliged to turn back for some hours to the afternoon of this day, and for some miles, to a scene of a very different kind—a scene so opposed to the other in all its circumstances, that it is strange to realise the close connection between them ; though the two were so closely linked together as to be incomprehensible, one without the other. The village of Lasswade lies on the Esk, at a much lower elevation, and nearer to the sea, than Rosscraig House. It was, at the time I speak of, a much more primitive village than it is now, when so many cottages of gentility have sprung up around as to make it almost a suburb of Edinburgh. It consisted of little more than one street, which straggled off into the country at one end, and at the other dragged itself across the bridge to conclude in a humble postscript of an additional street on the other side of the water. The Esk, which ran through it, was not beautiful at this point. It was somewhat dirty, and encumbered with the overflowings of the village ; but yet the groups of

clustered houses on either side of the river, framed in by the high wooded banks which you could see rising in the distance on either hand as you stood on the bridge, and with the fresh green fringe of rich and silent country beyond, was a pretty sight. There was no railway near at that time, but a coach ran regularly on all lawful days, from the corner of Princes Street to the Bull Inn in the High Street, and conveyed its few passengers with a regularity and steadiness quite satisfactory to those leisurely people. But the aspect of Lasswade, though considered cheerful and inviting by its Edinburgh visitors, was very dreary on this March afternoon, when the wind blew a hurricane, and the rain now and then came down in torrents. Between these storm-showers there came “blinks” of intermission, when people who loved to see what was going on came forth to their doors, after the fashion of the place ; and it was this humble sprinkling of the population which, as many of them remembered later, witnessed the passage through the town of a still humbler visitor, a poor woman who arrived shortly before the darkening in a

miserable condition enough. Two small boys accompanied her, wet through, splashed with mud, and crying with weariness, and with the buffets of the wind which blew them off their little legs. The woman was tall, wrapt in an old shawl of that indescribable no-colour of which the vagrant class has a monopoly. Her damp clothes hung limp about her, her poor bonnet, wet and limp like her dress, clung to the dark locks which here and there escaped from its cover. She was a stranger, as her weary and bewildered looks testified, and the children who clung to her on either side seemed to confuse her still more by their whimpering weariness. This melancholy little group came over the bridge in one of the pauses of the storm, when a few people had strayed out to their doors to relieve the *ennui* of the wet and stormy day by a little gossip at least. Chief among these were Merran Miller, the blacksmith's wife, a woman too fond of hearing everything that was going on (people said), for the comfort of her house; and the old postman, Simon Simson, whose work was over for the day. When the stranger approached this knot of gossips, and asked the way to Jean Macfarlane's inn, they all answered at once, glad of an event, with directions on the one hand and remonstrances on the other. Old Simon pointed out the way with officious haste; but Mrs Miller stopped the wayfarer to tender advice.

"My woman," she said, "I would not go to Jean Macfarlane's if I were you. You're wet and cauld, but a wee piece further would make little difference. John Todd at the Loanhead is real respectable, and would give you lodgings just as cheap."

"Hoots, woman! Jean Macfarlane will do her nae harm," cried

old Simon, interrupted in the midst of his instructions.

"It's no a house for an honest woman," said the smith's wife, "or for little bairns, poor things. They maun have travelled far the day to be so wet and so draiglet. Bide a moment and I'll give them a piece."

"Where did you say it was?" said the stranger, vacantly, paying no regard to this benevolent offer; and she went on with her children, following the old man's directions, without waiting for Mrs Miller's return with the "piece" which she had gone into her house to seek. This of itself was a strange thing to happen with any one so poor and miserable, and impressed the fact of her appearance upon the mind of the smith's wife, mortified by such a tacit refusal of her kindness. "She maun be a foreigner—or a fuil," said Merran, standing with the rejected piece in her hand, and watching the retreating figures as they approached Jean Macfarlane's door.

Jean Macfarlane's house was worse spoken of than any other house in Lasswade. Every disturbance that happened in the tranquil place came from that centre of disorder and lawlessness; and to lodge there, or to propose lodging there, was of itself a tacit acknowledgment of vagrancy, or at least of an absence of that regard for other people's opinions which is the first step towards respectability. All the disreputable class of travellers who passed through so quiet a place found their way to it by instinct, and recommended others of their own kind. No one was too low for Jean Macfarlane. Pedlars of the lowest class, travelling tinkers, tramps without even that pretence at occupation, frequented her house. She was herself the most dreaded personage in the village: a large, coarsely-handsome woman, loud-voiced and hot-tempered, the most



terrible scold and "randy" on all Eskside. The minister, who had once attempted, simple soul, to bring her to reason, had been made to flee before her; and the chief elder of the parish, Mr Mouter himself, was known to be in the habit of walking a mile round rather than pass her door,—a proceeding at which many people scoffed, asking, What was religion if it preserved you so little from the fear of man, or indeed of woman? It may be supposed, then, that the poor woman who openly asked to be directed to Jean Macfarlane's, was as poor and as completely beyond all regard for the prejudices of society as it was possible to be. She went on without pause or hesitation, with an abstracted indifference of demeanour which perhaps was occasioned by mere weariness and discomfort, to the dreaded door. The aspect of the house was not encouraging, neither was the reception which the traveller received. It was the last house in the village, dreary always, drearier than ever on this stormy afternoon. In the poor little parlour with its sanded floor, which was the better part of the establishment, two men, in wet coats steaming from the rain, sat before the fire, talking loudly over their little measure of whisky, while Jean's voice rang through the house, as she went and came, in a continuous and generally angry monologue. The new-comer came up to her timidly, holding back the children, and asked in a low tone for a room with a fire, where she and her children could rest. "A room to yoursel'!" said the mistress of the house; "set you up! are you better than other folk, that ye canna share and share alike? Sirs, this leddy's mista'en her road. She thinks she's at the Bull, where there's plenty o' parlours and private rooms, and naebody to gang near them. Here's a'

the private room you'll get in my hoose. Eh, woman, canna ye stop the mouth o' that girming brat? It's cauld and weet? I can see that: but it needna deave decent folk. Sit aff from the fire and let the woman in, ye twa drucken brutes of men! What do you want there, dribbling and drinking, and spending your wives' siller? Let the puir bit things get near the fire——"

"Jean, you're the greatest randy in the parish!" said one of the men, getting up in time to save himself from the ignominious push aside which sent his companion, reeling, out of the way.

"And if I'm a randy, what are ye? Drucken beasts that drink a' night and sit owre the fire a' day? Ca' yourselves men!" cried Jean, with the freedom of perfect independence. "You can sit down here, wife, if this will do ye. Eh, what a handless thing that canna warm her wean's feet, nor even gie't a clat on the side of the head to make it haud its tongue! Ye're a' alike, a' alike. Tea? Lord preserve us! what does the woman want with tea? A wee drap whisky would do ye ten times the good. Will I gie you what ye want? Oh ay, now you've gotten to your English I'll gie ye what ye want—if ye'll make thae little deevils stop their clatter, and no look such a draiglet idiot yoursel'."

The men laughed uneasily, not knowing whether they might not divert the stream of Jean's eloquence upon themselves, as she thus rated her other guest; but all took the despotism as a matter of course, and submitted meekly, without anything of the surprise or indignation with which the lodgers of a different kind of hostelry would have regarded such an address. They were her customers, it is true, but at the same time they were her subjects. The new-comer scarcely,

indeed, seemed to hear the abuse directed against her. She drew her little boys to the fire, took one on her knee and put her arm round the other, drying their little wet hands and faces with a corner of her shawl. They were subdued into quiet and comfort by the time that Mrs Macfarlane's servant-lass, Jess, brought them their tea, on a battered old iron tray, with coarse brown sugar, and a jug of skim-milk flanking the broken and smoky teapot. People in this poor woman's condition of life are not fastidious, and the miserable beverage warmed and comforted the humble travellers. After some time and much further parley with Jess—who was less peremptory and despotic than her mistress, though she, too, felt herself the superior of so poor a guest—the woman and her children were allowed to go upstairs into a dingy little bedroom,—a poor exchange for the fire-side which, grimy as it was, had the comfort of warmth. Dear reader, your children or mine would (in our apprehensions at least) have died of such treatment; but the tramp-mother is saved from anxieties which trouble mothers in other circumstances. She did all she could for them, and which of us can do more? She had no dry clothes to put on them, but she was not afraid of taking cold. She put them both on the bed, where they soon fell asleep, and covered them with a blanket;—they were damp but warm, and rest was heavenly to their poor little wearied limbs. They were asleep as soon as their little heads touched the pillow; and then she sat down by the bedside—to think.

How many processes get called by that name which have little enough to do with thought! The mother of these children had lived up to this time an almost entirely physical ex-

istence—that is, she had indeed gone through passions and miseries, and acted upon impulses which had to do with the more ethereal part of her being. She had been moved to despair, which is (I humbly suppose, not knowing) a sensation beyond the reach of any animal, save man; but never in all her life had she been moved before by a tremendous moral impulse, against her own will, and in contradiction to all that she believed to be for her own good and happiness. At other times she had eased the pain in her breast by sudden resolutions, sudden actions, all more or less like the instincts of an animal, to get rid of some burden or trouble which oppressed her. But somehow, she could not tell how, an entirely new tide had set in, mysterious and unaccountable, in her being. She had been driven by an impulse which she hated, which she resisted, which made her miserable, to do a certain act which her wild and uninstructed mind took to be justice. Long she had struggled against it, but gradually it had grown until it became too much for her, and had driven her at last to the verge of the act which would make her miserable, yet would be *right*. What a wonderful moral revolution had been worked in a creature so untaught as to seem without any moral nature at all, before things came to this pass, I need not say. And now she sat down, as she thought—to think; not to think whether she would do it, but—which it was to be? Her mind was wildly made up, after many a conflict, to submit to the wild law of justice which had seized upon her against her will. She was about to give up, to “them that had the right to it,” one of her children. What she had to decide now was—which was it to be?

I do not believe that a woman ever sullied by vice would have been



capable of the moral impression to which this woman had been made subject. I think that the natural consciousness (rather than conscience) of the vicious, coincides curiously with common law in this respect,—giving, with a bitterness of natural scorn—to which conventional interpretations give the aspect of a privilege and advantage—no fatherhood to the vicious man, and but one parent to the child of shame. Purity alone recognises the right on both sides ; though law stops short with insolent opposition to nature, and robs the virtuous woman as it robs, justly, the vicious man. How long it was before it dawned upon the woman of whom I speak, in the confusion of her uninstructed thoughts, in the bewildered silence of her ignorant soul, that she had robbed the father of her children in taking both of them, I cannot tell ; nor how long in her absolute solitude, with no one to counsel or even to understand what was in her mind, she fought against the idea ; but at last it had become too strong for her. To my thinking there could be no such unanswerable argument to prove that she had remained an uncontaminated wife ; and now the long-debated question had come to its hardest point, its most limited compass—which was she to give and which to keep, of the two who were all in all to her ? Which was she to give away ?

Poor soul ! she had done much that was very foolish, and much that was wrong (but that because she knew no better) in her life. She had been a trouble to many better people than herself. She had spoiled one other existence as well as her own, and thrown a cloud upon several lives—all without knowing much what she was doing,—without meaning it—out of ignorance. Now here she sat, absolute arbitress of two lives more, able to

determine their course almost as she pleased, yet as ignorant as ever—as little aware of the real character of her responsibility. If ever woman merited pity, this poor woman did—not only to give up one of her children, but to choose which to give up. Her brain, so dull, yet so keen as it was, became, as it were, suffused with a mist of pain ; her head grew giddy, a film came before her eyes ; a sense of the intolerable overwhelmed her—that terrible sensation which makes your very being reel like a drunken thing, that you cannot bear that which you know you must bear, whatever happens. She put down her throbbing head into her hands. To keep silent for that terrible moment—not to cry out and writhe, as this sword went through her heart, was all that she could do.

She was a tall young woman, with a fine, elastic, well-developed figure, looking about thirty, but not so old. Her features were very fine and regular: the great, restless, unquiet, dark eyes flashed out of deep caverns which seemed to have been hollowed out by pain or passion rather than by time. Any delicacy of complexion or youthful bloom which she had ever possessed must have been long gone, for her skin was burned to one uniform tint of reddish brown—the colour of exposure, of health and vigour, but of that vigour and health which are purchased by all the severities of an outdoor life. No one could see her once without looking again, without wondering over so much beauty accompanied by so little attractiveness. She had vagrant written in every line of her fine form and miserable dress. But notwithstanding this, there was that in her abstract look, always busy with something else than the thing immediately before her—in a certain careless calm of manner, and

indifference to all surrounding her, which, I think, would have made the most abandoned of men hesitate ere he offered any rudeness to this strange vagrant. She had a wedding-ring on her finger—that was no great matter, for it is easy to show to the world that ensign of respectability ; but there was something more trustworthy in her look and presence, the passionless abstraction of her air. In her rough dress, with her outdoor look, her hard hands, her strange beauty scarcely on the wane, she was protected from every shadow of insult by the stony purity of her looks. Such a woman might be miserable enough, but wanton never.

There were dreary red curtains half drawn over the window, and the dingy blind was partially drawn down, leaving little light in the miserable room, even had the sky been bright ; and it was now darkening towards night. It was the physical cold, I think—that discomfort which always makes itself doubly felt when the mind is weighed down with trouble—which roused her to the sense that what she had to do must be done quickly. She rose up and wandered, tottering, round and round the bed—first to one side, then to the other, asking herself that heart-rending question, Which? The children lay there in the pretty grace of childish *abandon*. One little fellow had kicked off unawares his muddy boot, which fell to the ground, and startled her so that she put her hands to her panting side, and did not recover the shock for some moments. He was the fair child of the two, and lay like a little white angel with his dimpled hands stretched above his head in the perfect grace of infant sleep. The other was almost as dark as his brother was fair ; his black curly locks were ruffled up from his bold forehead, his little

arms folded on his breast, his rose-mouth shut close with unconscious resoluteness—though it might be but the mother's sick fancy which saw this expression on the little face. They were beautiful children both, with a general resemblance to each other ; yet very unlike,—one so blond, and the other so dark, one so delicately gentle in his aspect, the other bold and handsome like a little gipsy prince. Poor soul ! what words can I use to describe the agony of choice with which this unhappy woman hung over them? But she made no choice at all—how could she? Suddenly, in passionate quick decision of her fate and his, she snatched the dark child into her arms—not because she loved him best, nor because he was the eldest, nor for any other reasonable motive under heaven. Only because the other, God help her ! had kicked off his boot upon the floor. In such a terrible choice, what but the most fantastic chance, the wildest hazard, can tell upon a mind distraught? She caught him up to her, with anxious care not to wake him, which contrasted strangely with the passion and misery in her face. Once having done it, nature itself demanded that no moment should be lost. She gathered him closely into her arms, wrapped her shawl round him, and leaving the other on the bed, went swiftly and silently down the dark stairs, and out into the night.

If any one had spoken to her or touched her, I believe the poor distracted creature would have gone mad or fallen into dead unconsciousness ; for nature was strained in her almost to the furthest limit : but no one saw or interfered, or knew what was being done. She never looked at the boy again, but held him fast and hurried on. He was a child of seven years old, but small and light ; in her vigorous arms—she was as strong as a man,



as light and rapid as a savage—he was as a feather's weight. She went away with him unnoticed, wrapping her poor shawl round him to keep him from the rain, through the muddy roads, in the storm and dusky twilight. Merran Miller, the smith's wife, shutting her door in the darkening, when the rain began to blow in, saw the dark figure pass, and said to herself that Jean Macfarlane had sent the beggar-wife away ; and oh ! what a night it was to travel, even for the like of her ! “ But what's come o' the bairns ? ” she asked herself ; then shut the door, and went in, and stirred her fire, and put on her kettle. The beggar-wife and her bairns were no concern of hers.

“ The beggar-wife ” went swiftly up by the dark Eskside beneath the trees, that waved overhead like spirits in pain. She was blinded with the rain, not with tears, for her eyes were dry and refused to shed more. Her limbs trembled under her, but her wild heart and purpose did not fail. After a time she came back again alone, without her burden. The dark branches still tossed against the pale sky, and kept on their passionate struggle against the elements ; but the forlorn human creature who tottered along underneath, swift but unsteady, beaten about by the wind, drenched by the rain, too miserable to feel either, had lost all sense of struggle. The lassitude of soul which comes after a great act accomplished was in her. She went like a ghost across the bridge, where no one now was visible, so much had the storm increased, and up the further end of the village street. Jean Macfarlane was sitting with her guests in the little room down-stairs, drinking with them, and filling the air with her loud excited voice and torrent of words. There was no one in the

passage or stair to note the dark figure gliding back to the room which no one had cared to notice since she entered it. It was dark, but she required no light. The other child, he who remained, her only one, lay still as she had left him. She put down her face upon his warm flushed cheek ; she lifted him tenderly on her lap, and put on his little boot, and soothed him when he woke and cried in the dark, and clung to her. “ Mother's here !—mother's here ! ” she murmured, crooning to him, poor wretched hopeless soul ! with the voice of a dove in her nest. Then she took him too in her arms, and going down-stairs stopped the dirty maid who was Jean Macfarlane's whole staff of service, and paid for the poor refreshment she had had. “ You're no going on sic a night ? ” said the girl ; “ and whaur's the other wee laddie ? ” “ He has gone on before,” said the mother. “ We are going to meet the coach at Loanhead.” “ Then you'll have to be awfu' quick,” cried the girl, compassionate. “ Poor wee man ! what a night to be out in ! Here's a piece to give them when you're in the coach ; but oh, woman, tak' pity on the bairns, and bide till the morn. It's enough to give them their death.”

“ I cannot stay—good night,” cried the stranger, passing out. The good-natured lass, though she was dirty, looked after her, shaking an unkempt head, and twisting up as she did so an elf-lock which had fallen out of the poor hold of her deficient hair-pins. “ Eh, thae tramps, what an awfu' life ! ” Jess said to herself, comparing her own position with that of the wanderer, with a thrill of superior comfort and well-being. She paused to fasten up the refractory lock before she followed to the door to look out after the departing guest ; but by that time the

darkness had swallowed her up, and nothing was visible except the wild sweeping rain, which came down in a sheet, visible across the blackness of the night, like the warp of a sable web. "Lord save us! sic a night to be out in! and oh thae puir weans!" cried Jess, with a grimy tear in the corner of her eye.

The stranger and her child got into the coach at Loanhead, but they did not reach Edinburgh in that respectable conveyance. Somewhere in the outskirts of the town they managed to drop out of the coach, leaving the money for their fare on the damp seat, which their wet clothes had soaked. "A queer customer yon, but an awfu' honest woman!" the coachman said, with mingled wonder and admiration. It was still scarcely night, though so much had happened since it began to grow dark. The vagrant found her way to some haunt of vagrants such as I do not know, and have no chance of being able to describe, and there passed the night safe from all search or possibility of pursuit, encompassed by securities and precautions which can only be made perfect by a class at war with society. She herself had done no crime so far as any one knew; but the instinctive suspicion of a race accustomed to shelter from the eye of

justice kept her safe. Notwithstanding the hue and cry that was raised after her, she went on her way as secure as any woman could be, and got back to England with her boy, and disappeared among the mysterious fastnesses of her class, not to reappear or be heard of for years. Poor soul! she had left no traces behind her by which she could be recognised. Even in Jean Marfarlane's house the instinct of caste was roused to cover her retreat. "A woman with a wean? Am I to remark a' the women with weans that come and gang afore my door—there's ower mony o' them, far ower mony! I've something better to do than to glowr at women," cried the mistress of the place. "There was but ane here—a real decent person, with twa bairns. She took them baith away with her, safe and sound, and got the coach at Loanhead," said Jess. "What like was she? How am I to tell that never saw her but in her bannet? A' that I can tell you was that she sighed sair, mair like a moan than a sigh. She was a real decent woman," cried goodhearted Jess. And this was all her history and description—all by which she could be identified among others. The prolonged investigations that were made disclosed nothing more.

### CHAPTER III.

The hall at Rosscraig was large and long: there was a great fireplace in it, from which came a feeble gleam of firelight. A large lamp, swinging from the rafters of the roof, threw but a moderate light into its great height and space; but upon a side-table a candle was flaring, its long waving flame blown about by the movement in the air, which had not yet subsided after the opening of the door. A group of servants who

had been crowding round some unseen object in the corner dispersed hastily as Lady Eskside was seen descending the stair, but only to hang about behind-backs waiting the interpretation of the mystery. One person only, an old and confidential servant, kept her place near the door, round which there was a wide stain of wet made by the rain, which had burst in when it was opened. Lady Eskside went forward bewildered,



not perceiving what it was she had been called to see; and it was not till a sick disappointment had begun to creep over her that the old lady found out the central object on which all eyes were turned. On the great skin mat which lay between the door and the wall stood something so small and dark as to be almost undistinguishable, till the light caught a glimmer and sparkle from a pair of eyes low down, gleaming out of a little pale and scared face. Lady Eskside went slowly forward, bracing herself for something, she knew not what. When she caught the gleam of those eyes, she stood still and uttered a sudden cry.

A child stood there, with its feet buried in the long skin of the mat, backing closely into the corner for support, half frightened, half defiant. Tears were standing in those great eyes, and hanging on the pale little cheek—the lip was ready to quiver at a moment's notice; but still he confronted the novel world in which he found himself with a certain defiance. The old lady, who felt all her dreams and hopes suddenly realised at the first glance, went nearer to him, with tremulous excitement, and stooped down over the child. Her whole frame was trembling—a mist obscured her eyes. "Who are you?—who are you?" she cried. "Oh, who are you?" then stopping short as the frightened look got the mastery on the child's face, and his lip began to quiver, she changed her tone with a wonderful effort, and dropped down upon her knees on the mat to bring herself on a level with him. Lady Eskside saw in the little face more than any one else could see, and knew him, as she said afterwards, at once. "My bonnie man!" she cried, "my poor little man, nobody will hurt you. What is your name, and who brought you here? You are safe

—quite safe—and nobody will harm you. Who are you, and who brought you here?"

The child made a pause—he was struggling proudly against his inclination to cry; and there was breathless silence in the hall as if some great revelation had been about to be made. Then a small whimpering voice, with tears in it, made itself audible, "I am—Val," it said.

Lady Eskside rose up as if by some force which she could not resist. She turned upon Mary Percival, and the group of servants beyond, with uplifted hands, calling their attention imperatively, though for the moment she could not speak. Then her voice broke forth, choked and hoarse, "Val! Mary, you hear, you hear! Did not I know it? Val! Oh, at last, at last!"

Then all at once she grew quiet, and knelt down trembling upon the mat. "My bonnie little man!" she said, half weeping, "tell me again. Val—Val what? And, oh, who brought you here?"

"Nobody don't call me nothing but Val," said the child. "Mammy brought me. Not for no harm. She's gone back for Dick."

"Ah!" Lady Eskside's breath seemed to stop. She put out one hand behind her, and plucked blindly at Mary Percival's dress. "Your mammy has gone back—for—Dick?"

"He's down at the village," said the child, keeping his eyes fixed upon her with the watchfulness of terror. "He's asleep. I've got to wait for mammy. She put me in out of the rain. I'll be good till mammy comes. Oh, don't let him touch me! I ain't come for no harm."

Harding the butler had approached nearer, anxious to bring his superior cleverness to his mistress's aid; and it was this movement which made the little fellow back further into

his corner, holding up one small arm before his face as if to ward off a blow. A precocious knowledge of danger and a precocious desperation of baby courage glimmered in his frightened but excited eyes. "I won't touch nobody if you'll let me alone," he cried.

"Stand back, Harding," cried Lady Eskside; and then she laid her soft old hand upon the child's raised arm, which yielded to her touch. "Nobody will harm you here, my poor little bonnie man. Oh, look at him! look at him, Mary! Is it my old een that deceive me? Is it from having always one idea in my head? But you are not half-crazy like me. Mary, try to forget the name and everything else. Look at his face!"

Mary Percival stood close behind, as much moved in her way, though with feelings very different from those of her old friend. Instead of the love and yearning in Lady Eskside's heart, there was something which felt like half-hatred—a repugnance for which she detested herself—in the intense interest with which she had watched every look and movement of the little alien creature. Her voice was low and choked as she replied, as if the words were extracted from her, "I am looking at him. He is dark—not fair—like—his father. He has different eyes. Oh, Lady Eskside, what can I say? Everything else is Richard—everything; and I don't wish to think so like you."

I do not believe that Lady Eskside heard these last words, which were foreign to the passionate tenderness and joy in her own mind. She heard only so much as chimed in with her own thoughts. "Mary sees it too!" she said, with a low outcry of such emotion as cannot be put into words. She was still on her knees in the attitude of prayer. With one hand she held the child

fast, and with the other she covered her face. Some low sounds, but they were not audible words, came from her as she knelt—sounds which no one around knew, yet all understood by the strange sentiment of mingled anguish and rapture there was in them. Then she rose up, shaken and agitated, yet all her vigorous self.

"Harding," she said, "you'll stay here and watch—till—she comes back. For God's sake take care what you do. You must not scare her, or send her away; or go out yourself down the avenue, and let your wife stay here. It's a matter of life and death. Marg'ret, you hear all I say." This was to the housekeeper, Harding's wife. "Keep the house quiet; no noise, no excitement; but watch and be ready. Let one of the women prepare the green rooms, and light fires; and Joseph can bring me wine and some milk for the children. Oh, thank God that I can say such a word! You'll show—*her*—every respect. Marg'ret, Marg'ret, you know what I mean——"

"Oh, yes, my lady—yes! I see it a'," cried the housekeeper; "but it will be too much for you."

"Joy's never hard to bear," said Lady Eskside, with a smile. "My bonnie boy! come with me—you are not afraid of me?"

The child looked at her with his great eyes, which fright and novelty and the paleness of his little face made twice their usual size. "Richard never had eyes like these," Miss Percival said to herself; but it would have been cruel, indeed, to have said this aloud. He paused a moment irresolute, and then gave a wild glance at the door, as if the impulse of flight was the strongest; then he put his little soft hand, half-reluctantly, into the soft white hand held out for it. The old lady looked round upon them all with a glow of



triumph indescribable ; how her hand closed upon those little tremulous fingers ! She marched to the door of the dining-room, which was nearest, her whole figure expanding like some Roman woman in a victor's procession. What battle had she won ? what enemy had she conquered ? Mary, full of strange agitation, followed her, wondering, tremulous, excited, but always with a certain repugnance, into the warm room, all ruddy and cheerful with light from the fire.

And then a sudden change, strange to be seen, came upon this old Volumnia, this heroic matron in her triumph. She sat down by the fire, in the great chair where her old lord had been sitting over his wine half an hour before, and gathered up the child into her lap, and turned at once as by the touch of a wand into the old mother, the mere woman, all whose instincts culminated in simple maternity. Perhaps her delicate old hands had never touched anything so muddy and rough before ; but she was totally unconscious of this as she set the shivering wet little figure upon her satin lap, and began to unlace and draw off his wet boots. Lady Eskside was a proud woman, fastidious in everything she approached or handled ; but she undid the muddy leather laces, and pulled off the dirty little boots, and stained her worn and fine old hands, so delicately white and dainty, without hesitation, even without a thought. She held the child close to her, murmuring over him unconscious sounds of endearment, like a dove in her nest. "My little man ! my bonnie little man !—Put out your poor wee feetie to the fire—how cold they are, the poor wee pilgrim feet—and how far they've wandered ! but this is home, my darling, this is home !—And so they call you Val !—Oh, my bonnie boy, to be out in such a

night,—they call you Val ? and your brother is Dick—oh, may God keep my heart that I may not die of joy !"

The child sat on her knee with all the gravity of his age, and heard everything, but made no response. I think the weariness and the unusual comfort began alike to tell upon him ; the cheerful light dazzled his eyes, the warmth crept into his baby limbs, and even the excitement and strange novelty of his position were not enough at seven years old to counteract these subduing influences. By-and-by his little eyes began to wink as he gazed into the fire and felt the drowsy spell of the génial warmth. When Joseph brought the tray, he took the piece of cake which was put into his hand, and ate it slowly, gazing and winking at the fire. Then his head began to droop against Lady Eskside's breast. With an effort he opened his eyes at intervals, fixing them severely as if they could never close again, upon the fire, then gradually subdued by the warmth shut them altogether, and half turning towards her, nestled his head upon the old lady's shoulder. As his curls fell finally into this resting place, Lady Eskside turned to Mary with an unspeakable look : "He knows them that belong to him," she said in a whisper. Her arms encircled him with that delight of protecting maternity which goes through all the levels of creation. It was but the hen gathering her chickens under her wing—yet God himself can find no tenderer simile. All expression, save that last supreme beatitude which borders upon vacuity, went out of her face. She forgot everything around her—the past, the future, her duties of the present. Everything in the world had become suddenly concentrated to her in this action, which was no more elevated than that of a bird in her nest, this

watch which secured warmth, slumber, and safety to the child.

Miss Percival sat on the other side of the great dining-table and gazed at her old friend with that mixture of irritation, wonder, and reluctant sympathy which provokes and tantalises a friendly soul when watching some novel exhibition of human weakness. She could not understand Lady Eskside's instant adoption into her very heart of the strange little unknown creature, dropped from the skies or by the winds, unseen and unknown until this moment, and which might be a little demon in human form for aught that any one knew. And yet she did understand in a way which made her irritation rather greater than less. Mary was not very clever, not very remarkable in any way ; but she was herself—thinking and feeling according to her own nature and principles, and not according to any conventional model. She did not possess that sugary sweetness of disposition or those very ethereal Christian sentiments which put aside all personal consciousness of wrong and seem to prefer injury. Richard Ross had been, if not her lover, at least so indicated by every family prepossession, so prepared by training and association to be her eventual husband, that his sudden and strange marriage had given a shock to her nerves and moral nature from which she had never recovered. I cannot tell if she had ever been what people call "in love" with him. If she had, her love had never taken full shape and form, but had lingered insidiously about her heart, prepared, by every indication of her young life, and every probability of the future, to come into being at a touch. This touch was given in another way when Richard disappeared into the nameless obscurity and shame that surrounded his marriage. Her whole being received the shock, and

received it without warning or preparation. It changed the aspect of all mankind to her, more perhaps than it changed her feeling towards Richard. He it was who had inflicted the wound, but its effects were not confined to him. She was the gentlest creature in existence, but her pride was roused against the whole world, in which outward appearances seem ever to gain the day, and the still and unpretending are held of no account. Instead of making the more (after these reflections) of the simple beauty she possessed, which was of a very attractive kind, though moderate in degree, or taking the good of her real advantages, Mary had done what many proud gentlewomen do—she had retired doubly into herself after the shock she received. She had withdrawn from society, and society, heedless, had gone on its way and paid little attention to the withdrawal : so that the penalties fell not at all upon it, but upon herself. She was still young, between six and seven and twenty ; but something of the aspect which that same mocking and careless world calls that of an old maid, was stealing imperceptibly upon her. Her pride, though so natural, thus told doubly against her—for people who were incapable of understanding the shock she had received or the revulsion of her proud and delicate heart, called her, with light laughter, a disappointed woman, foiled in her attempt to secure a husband. Many of us who ought to know much better use such words in thoughtless levity every day. I need not enter into the circumstances which, on this night of all others, had brought Mary to Rosscraig, and recalled to her mind, through Lady Eskside's story, many sharp and painful memories which she had partially succeeded in banishing from her thoughts. I do not think that this rush of recollection had the effect of moving her to



any enthusiasm for Richard's child. The strange bitterness of scorn with which she learned what kind of woman that was who had been preferred to herself, moved not the best part of her nature ; for Mary, as I have said, was not sweetness and gentleness personified, but a genuine human creature, not all good. Perhaps the very strength of her antagonistic feelings, and the absence of any general maudlin sympathy with everything pitiful presented to her, made her all the more certain that the child was Richard's child, the child of the tramp whom Richard had admired and loved more than herself ; an interest which was half repugnance attracted her eyes and her thoughts to this little creature, who was assuredly no stranger, no impostor, but the very flesh and blood which might have been her own. Yes, he might have been her child—and the blood ran tingling with shame, anger, pride, and dislike to Mary's very fingertips, as this thought flashed through her mind. She sat and watched him, falling asleep on Lady Eskside's knee, with the strangest aching mixture of irritation and interest. She was half envious, half impatient of the strange beatitude and absorption with which her old friend held the boy, throwing her own very being into him—the child who had been stolen away from all lawful life and protection, who had lived among outcasts, a beggar, a baby-adventurer, the child of a tramp ! How could that proud old woman take him out of hands so stained, and take him to her pure and honourable breast ? Poor Mary was not quite responsible for the hot anger, the unjust condemnation of this thought ; these angry feelings surged uppermost as the worst of us always does, to the surface of her agitated soul.

The lamp had been placed in a corner, so as not to disturb the

child's sleep, and the room formed a dark background to that group, which was relieved against the dusky glow of the fire. Silence was in the house, sometimes interrupted by a stealthy suggestive creaking of the great door, as Mrs Harding from time to time looked out into the night. The winds still raged without, and the rain swept against the window, filling the air with a continuous sound. Soon that stealthy noise outside, which betrayed the watchers who were on the outlook for the mother's return with the other child, affected Mary with a sympathetic suspense. Her imagination rushed out to meet the new-comer, to realise her appearance. Richard's wife ! She could not sit still and think of this new figure on the scene. If the woman came Mary felt that she must withdraw ; she would not meet her—she could not ! and this feeling made her eagerly anxious for the appearance of the stranger who excited such wild yet causeless antagonism in her own mind. She went to the window, and drew aside the curtain and gazed out—that she might see her approach, she said to herself, and escape out of the way. Time went on, and Lady Eskside, worn out with emotion, and hushed by happiness, dozed too, I think, in the easy-chair with the sleeping child on her lap, while Miss Percival stood, with every sense awake, watching the dark avenue through the window. And I do not know how long it was before, all at once, another conviction took possession of her—which was the true one—that Richard's wife had no intention of coming back. This thought came to Mary in a moment, as if some one had said it in her ear. Had some one said it ? Was it a mysterious communication made to her somehow, from one soul to another through the darkness of that night which hid the speaker, which

had fallen upon the child's mother like a veil? Miss Percival sank, almost fell, down upon the chair, on which she had been kneeling in her eagerness to look out. She was startled and shaken, yet calmed, with sensations incomprehensible to her. She sat still and listened, but without any further expectation. A strange dim realisation of the unknown creature of whom she had been thinking hard thoughts came into her mind. Was she too, then, an independent being, with a heart which could be wrung, and a mind capable of suffering?—not merely Mary's rival, Mary's antagonist, a type of lower nature and coarser impulse. The wind abated, the rain cleared off, the silent minutes crept on, but no one came to the house where all except the old lord were listening and watching. Mary, roused at length, stirred up in all her own energies by this conviction, felt that doubt was no longer possible. The unknown mother had given this remorseful tribute to the house she had despoiled, but had kept her share and would appear no more.

"Dear Lady Eskside," she said, laying her hand on her old friend's shoulder. "Don't you think it would be better to let Mrs Harding put him to bed."

"Eh? Is it you, Mary? What were you saying? I do not feel sure," said Lady Eskside, looking up with a smile, "that I was not dozing myself upon the bairn's head. Put him to his bed? it would perhaps be the best thing, as you say; but I cannot give him over to Harding, I will carry him upstairs myself."

"Rather give him to me," said Mary; "he is too heavy for you. I will take him to the old nursery——"

"Where his father and you have played many a day," said Lady

Eskside, with a smile which was weak with happiness. "Oh, my dear, my dear! but how different our thoughts were then!" Here she saw a contraction upon Mary's face which gave her a note of warning. "Call the women, Mary," she added, hurriedly. "I have lost count of time. *She* should have been here by now with the other one. Oh! but I can never love him like this one, that has slept on my bosom like a child of my own, and crept into my heart."

"She has not come. She does not mean to come," said Mary; but she spoke low, and Lady Eskside did not mark what she said. Her own mind was filled to overflowing with her new possession, and no real anxiety about the other one or about the mother existed for the moment in her mind. "Jean, take this 'darling in your arms—softly, softly," she said to the maid. "You are a strong, good girl, and you will carry him kindly. Don't waken my bonnie boy. I'll go with you upstairs and see him put to bed."

And, absorbed in this new occupation, she hurried upstairs after Jean, giving a hundred warnings—to lay his head comfortably—to hold him faster—to throw her apron about his little feet—like a foolish old mother, half beside herself with love and happiness. She could think of nothing but the lost treasure restored; and I might spend pages on the description before I could tell you with what renewal of all old and dead joys she watched the maid's anxious but vain attempts to prepare the child for bed without awaking him, and to soothe him when he stirred and pushed them away with his rosy feet, and murmured whimpering childish objections to everything that was being done for him. In this unlooked for fulness of joy, she forgot everything else in the world.



## INTERNATIONAL VANITIES.

## NO. II.—FORMS.

Two thousand two hundred years have passed since Cneius Flavius stole from his employer, Appius, a list of the forms employed in Roman law, and published a description of them for the benefit of his fellow-citizens. Since that day forms, formulas, formularies, and formalities, have gone on multiplying in such huge proportions, that no mind, however arithmetically powerful, can possibly realise their present number. For two-and-twenty centuries—and particularly since we have grown civilised—a great part of the inventive power of mankind has been incessantly directed, in every land, to the discovery of new special shapes of rules, wordings, documents, reports, returns, and regulations, all of which have been rendered obligatory, at some time or other, by edict or by usage. More books have been written about forms than on any other subject that the world has known; forms have been created for, and applied to, every imaginable class of questions, and every act of life; Greek fire, dinner, troubadours, and women's rights; gladiators, salvation, chemistry, and ordeal by touch; single combat, cricket, cock-fighting, and revolutions,—have all, in turn, had forms applied to them; and the fractiousness of nature has alone prevented eager legislators from affixing strict formalities to earthquakes, avalanches, meteors, and typhoons. Nothing that we can anyhow get at is permitted to subsist without a form; all the occupations and all the trades of men, from breaking stones to winning battles, are controlled by forms; ambition, appetite, and love, are manifestly restrained by them; and

it may be doubted whether even such seemingly independent subjects as toothache, London fogs, and the potato disease, are absolutely free from their hidden action. But, all permeating and all subjugating as their influence has always been, universal and omnipresent as it continues still to be, it is in law and in international relations that that influence is most extensive and most palpable. Law appears at first sight, perhaps, to be, of the two, the more overloaded with formalities; but, if the abundance of legal forms has become everywhere a proverb—if several sorts of lawyers, and many thousand lawyers of each sort, have been found necessary in every country to aid the bewildered population to carry out the countless legal formulas imposed upon it—a little consideration shows us that, though our exterior relations may seem to be less encumbered with special details, it is not because international formalities are in reality less numerous, but solely because they are hidden away under various deceptive names which disguise their real nature. What we call tariffs, customs' regulations, ships' manifests, bills of lading, and all manner of trading papers;—what we call passports, quarantine, rights of local jurisdiction, naturalisation, domicile, and the thousand complicated observances between peoples,—are nothing else but international formalities, just as much as treaties are. They offer very large matter for examination, far too large to be considered here as a whole, for, even in limiting our attention to the purely diplomatic elements of the question, we shall have more

than enough to talk about. All that we can do is to select a few examples, choosing out of the enormous mass before us those which seem best to illustrate the more essential aspects of the subject.

Most of the treatises on international law contain eager dissertations on the shape, sentiment, and style of diplomatic documents; and special formularies, in scarcely credible variety, have been provided in order to furnish models of every kind of act, letter, or communication, which can possibly be wanted under any sort of circumstances. The mere titles of all these books are curious and suggestive. There are at least fifty different "Guides," besides a boundless quantity of works on "the manner of negotiating," "the principles of negotiation," "the art of negotiating," followed by "essays on court style," "courses of diplomatic style," "literature of states' rights," and "courtesies in war;" and, that no sort of form in peace or war should be neglected, there is even a special German treatise on "Trumpeters and their prerogatives." As this last astounding statement will naturally provoke doubt, it may be useful to add, at once, that the treatise in question is contained in the fourth volume of a collection published in 1741 at Halle, under the long name of "*Der prüfenden Gesellschaft fortgesetzte zur Gelehrsamkeit gehörige Bemühungen.*" But, as might perhaps be expected, these various books are in substance identically alike: the matter of which they treat is vast, but it has a limit, and all the *Mémoires* which could be filled with new details on it were composed a long time ago. Authors vary in the tongue which they employ, in pomposity and unction, and in words and faculty of expression; but these are the only real differences between the

piles of publications which treat of "forms." The Germans have of course been fertile in this sort of literature; at least one half of the volumes devoted to it have been edited beyond the Rhine, where the "*diplomatischer Kanzleystyl*" has long been profoundly studied. These guide-books (for such, in fact, they are) treat of everything which can possibly be affiliated to the subject, and sometimes include topics which seem, to unelastic minds, to lie a long way outside it. They do not constitute light reading, and, after the first three minutes, they cease even to be instructive; but they show us international vanities in another of their forms, and that is why we are looking into them for examples.

The first question touched upon in these ready letter-writers for diplomatists in difficulties is usually the choice of the language to be used for official communications; and an idea may be at once obtained of the hair-splitting spirit of analysis with which the matter has been dissected, by the fact that, before approaching the discussion of selection between different tongues, the authorities begin by dividing talk itself into six uses—Court, Diplomatic, Church, Judicial, School, and vulgar. With such a starting-point as this, it will easily be understood that the treatment of the entire subject has attained a height of bewildering amplification, of labyrinthic branch-considerations, of universal developments wandering into connexity with space and time, of which no unprepared outsider could suspect the possibility. The human mind has shown itself to be ingenious enough in its inventions of new religions (which in America are still budding at an average of one per week); but really, Teutonic writers have exhibited an almost equal copiousness



of imagination in their description of the possible shades, tints, and delicacies of diplomatic style. One reads their meandering dissertations with a feverish but half-stupid awe, and with a persistent curiousness as to what could have been the physical aspect of the men who, with the evident conviction that they were rendering a service to mankind, spent their lives in seriously composing such monstrous twaddle. It would be useless to give their names, for nine-tenths of them are utterly unknown to fame, and the owners of the other tenth have long ago ceased their labours; besides which, it would be disagreeable to their families.

Having thus defined the different categories of talk, these word-refiners go on to say that "the right of equality of nations extends to the choice of the language which their Governments employ for diplomatic communications." Who would have suspected that when our Foreign Office (which, itself, is disrespectfully denominated F. O. by its retainers) sends a telegram in English to the King of Dahomey, it is exercising "one of the rights of the equality of nations"? And yet it is so! How proud it makes one feel to learn, in this sudden way, that the simplest acts of life may be manifestations of glorious principles, and that possibly we can do nothing without implying something that we didn't know anything about. But, after this bright beginning, the form-discussers go on to tell us, in mazy phrases, with references, foot-notes, explanations, and quotations of opinions and authorities, that there is no rule at all to guide either F. O. or the Ministry of any other Power in the determination of the tongue which it should prefer for its letters to neighbouring states. It is particularly disappointing to discover, after strug-

gling through seventy-four tangled pages, which contain 451 extracts, in eight European languages, and in Latin, Greek, and Turkish too, that the sole object of the author, all the time, was to prove conclusively, by the strongest arguments, and with the aid of all his friends and predecessors, that, from the beginning, he had nothing at all to say. What does appear, however, to come clearly out of this, is that all countries have always used whatever dialect they pleased in their dealings with foreign courts, and that it is altogether an error to suppose that there is, or ever has been, any special language generally accepted for diplomatic purposes. It is true that momentary preferences, resulting from temporary causes, have existed at certain periods; it is true that in the time of Castilian glory, Spanish was brought into frequent use; that Latin was a good deal talked and written down to the eighteenth century; and that, after the victories of Louis XIV., French became rather generally employed; but there are quantities of instances, at all these dates, of the simultaneous handling, by every nation, of its own language alone for negotiations and for drafting treaties. All the wars and all the conquests which were then perpetually taking place in Europe left languages unchanged, both in their official and their domestic character. It is only during relatively recent years that conquerors have recognised the policy and even the necessity of imitating the old Roman practice, and of rendering their own tongue obligatory on the vanquished. If, then, the idea of utilising language as a means of consolidating dominion was not resorted to by great captains or great Ministers, it follows, naturally, that they must have seen less advantage still in the choice of any special dialect for mere

international relations. Accident or fashion appears to have been—in this matter, as in so many others—the sole guides of diplomatists, for there was, certainly, no kind of definitely adopted rule or habit.

If we select examples from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—the very epoch when French is imagined to have been becoming an almost universal tongue—we find the most hopelessly contradictory evidence on the subject. We discover that some of the most famous treaties, those of Nimeguen, Ryswick, Utrecht (1713), Vienna (1725 and 1738), and of the Quadruple Alliance, were all in Latin; that in 1752 the Austrian minister at Naples spoke Latin officially to the king; that though Louis XVI. wrote in French to Leopold II. of Austria, the latter replied by a complaint that this act was contrary to the usage of the Courts, which required that all communications between France and Germany should be in Latin; and that, though the treaty of Lunéville (1801) was written in French alone, the ratification of it by the German Emperor was given in Latin. But, in opposition to all these cases of the maintenance of Latin, there are almost as many contemporaneous examples of the adoption of French, not only by France itself, but—curiously enough—by German Governments between themselves. French was used for the purely local treaties of Breslau and Berlin (1742), Dresden (1745), Hubertsbourg (1763), and Teschen (1779). The value of this odd proof of the voluntary application of French by foreign States is, however, upset again by the fact that, in other cases where French has been employed, a clause has been inserted in the treaty explaining that France had no right to deduce any claim of precedence from this admission of

her language. Examples of this stipulation will be found in the treaties of Rastadt (1714), Aix-la-Chapelle (1768), and in the final act of the Congress of Vienna. This last treaty says (Article 120), “The French language having been exclusively employed for all the copies of the present treaty, it is recognised by the Powers who have taken part in this Act that the employment of that language is to produce no consequences in the future; each power reserves to itself the right of adopting, in future negotiations and conventions, the language which it has previously used for its diplomatic relations, and the present treaty cannot be cited as an example contrary to established usages.” It will be recognised that it is difficult to extract from such conflicting testimony any sign of a real preference or of an established custom, and that the authors are right in saying that there never has been any generally admitted diplomatic tongue. The same differences continue, with even greater vigour, in our own time; for almost every nation now uses its own language only for its despatches. England habitually employed French for diplomatic purposes down to the end of the last century, but in 1800 the Foreign Office began to write in English to the Ambassadors resident in London; and, when Lord Castlereagh joined the Allied Armies as representative of Great Britain, he used English for all his communications to his European colleagues. At a later period Mr Canning ordered several of the British Ministers abroad to adopt their own language for their official communications to the Courts to which they were accredited, but authorised them to add a translation. This latter permission was suppressed by Lord Aberdeen in



1851, on the ground that despatches ought to be laid before Parliament in the exact words in which they were presented. The German Diet decided in 1817 to employ German (adding a translation in French or Latin) for all its foreign communications.

Next to the choice of speech comes the graver and far more complicated question of shapes of composition. This element of the subject is so vast that the mere list of names of the documents in diplomatic use is long enough to provide reading for a winter evening. Each country has its own denominations for the various forms which it supposes to be essential to the conduct of its international relations; and it will be conceived, without an effort, that when all these descriptions are multiplied by the twelve or thirteen languages which possess them, and when local practices are added to the account, it presents rather a startling total. The French diplomatic manual alone contains 416 separate types and models. We English have a tolerable collection of our own, enough to cause no small worry to the servants of the Crown who have to fill them up; but, taken as a whole, we are certainly less afflicted with this particular class of suffering than Continentals are.

The consequence of our comparative exemption from the tyranny of red tape and rules is, however, that most of us remain totally unlearned in the mysteries and meanings of the words which designate the various manuscripts employed in foreign chancelleries. It is possible that we all may know (though, frankly, it is scarcely likely) the exact signification of Bull, Brief, and Protocol, of Capitulations, Cartels, and Conclusums, of Exequaturs and Concordats; but how many are there of us who can explain off-hand the nature of all the im-

plements, and shapes and shades of action which have been or still are employed by nations towards each other? How many are there of us who can define, for instance, the exact difference between a Rescript and a Pragmatic Sanction; between the Golden Bull and a Placetum Regium? or who can tell, without looking at a dictionary, what are the diplomatic meanings of *sub spe rati*, *pro memoria*, or *in petto*; what is a Verbal Note, a *mémoire*, or a *réversale*; what is a Firman and what a Hatti Sherif; or what is the precise distinction between Federates and Confederates, and between a Nation and a State? It is true that many of the things described by these half-archeological nomenclatures are of but little use; that they mainly serve to show the vanity of nations, and are preserved, like ceremonial, for the greater glory of realms and sovereigns. But they constitute one of the elements of Forms, one of the manifestations of international pretensions: for this reason, and also because they are not altogether unamusing, it is worth while to explain them here. It may be as well, however, to observe that scarcely any of the hard names which have just been interrogatively enumerated are employed or needed in the daily humdrum of embassies or ministries: they only come in exceptionally. The ordinary labour of attachés includes no Latin now; it is very much like work in an office anywhere, for—mournful as it is to own it—copying letters and the rule of three constitute its main elements. But still attachés have to know—or rather, are supposed to know—the answers to the foregoing questions; if they are ignorant, all they have to do is to go into the library, look for the right book (the librarian will tell them which it is), and inform their

minds. But the public has neither the library, nor the librarian, nor the time; the public may be presumed to be quite indifferent on the subject, and to possess, with rare exceptions, no knowledge of the rules which guide diplomatic negotiations. It is probably unaware that the most elementary of those rules is to employ verbal, that is unsigned, notes for explaining details, resuming conversations, or for indications of possible proposals; while signatures are generally reserved for documents in which an engagement is implied. A complete vocabulary of the technicalities of the profession would be a new language to nearly all of us, no matter where we may have been at school; and it would be so dull that nobody would look at it. We will choose a few examples amongst the least solemn of the series, and will do our best to be respectful, and not to laugh at all during our explanation of them.

A Protocol is, in its first meaning, a document by which a fact is described with all its attendant circumstances, or by which an authentic and exact account of a conference or a deliberation is given. The reporters of the 'Daily Telegraph' do not probably suspect that when they write soul-enthraling histories of a cricket-match at Lords', or of a meeting of the Shareholders of the Patent Submarine Respiration Company (Limited), they are, in fact, composing protocols. The word has, of late years, acquired a second signification on the Continent; it is now often taken to indicate a convention which is not subject to the formalities of ratification. Subsidiarily, protocol means also the science of the shape of official letters; we shall understand this better when we reach that section of the subject.

A Conclusum is a *résumé* of the demands presented by a Government.

It may be discussed, and therein lies its difference with an ultimatum, which must be accepted or rejected as it stands. The *menu* of a dinner is a conclusum in a friendly form; it is, essentially, a *résumé* open to discussion.

A Mémoire or Memorandum is a summary of the state of a question, or a justification of a decision adopted. Life is full of examples of it, particularly in conversations between wives and husbands.

A Lettre Réversale is a counter engagement on a question, and is given usually in reply to a letter claiming that engagement: it used to signify, particularly, a written declaration by which one Court recognised that a special concession granted to it by another Court in no way affected the anterior prerogatives of either. Réversales were also used to guarantee the maintenance of rights which were momentarily suspended; thus, when the Emperors of Germany, who were bound by the Golden Bull to go to Aix-la-Chapelle to be crowned, decided to perform the ceremony elsewhere, they always sent a Réversale to Aix declaring that the change of place in no way affected the privileges of that city, and was to create no precedent for the future.

A Proposal is taken by an ambassador *ad referendum* when it lies outside his instructions or his powers; when he expresses no opinion on it, and simply refers it to his Government: but if he thinks it of a nature to suit the views of his employers—if he wishes to prove, by his own action, how desirous he is of seeing it adopted—then he provisionally accepts it *sub spe rati*, "in hope of ratification," and writes home for permission to definitely say yes.

A Cardinal is named *in petto* when the publication of his nomination is deferred in consequence of the advisability of temporarily



maintaining him in a diplomatic post which, according to etiquette, he could no longer hold if he had actually received the Hat. All nominations *in petto* are contained in a sealed letter, which the Sovereign Pontiff produces in consistory, and then deposits in his archives; and if a Pope should die before giving force to a promotion thus effected, his successor is bound to open the sealed letter and to carry out the nomination. The last example of an appointment under these conditions was that of Cardinal di Pietro, nuncio at Lisbon, who was named *in petto* in 1853, and did not receive his Hat till 1856.

Bull was originally the name of the ball-shaped leaden seal annexed to letters from the Emperor or the Pope; it is now applied exclusively to documents issued in the name of the Holy See. The seal bears the image of St Peter and St Paul on one side, and on the other the name of the reigning Pope: the writing is in Gothic letters, and is inscribed on the rough side of the parchment. Bulls of grace are fastened with silk cords, and bulls of justice with hempen strings; while bulls of which the effect is intended to be permanent begin with the strange phrase, "In futuram Dei memoriam." Briefs are less important: they are written on the smooth side, in modern characters; they are not signed by the Holy Father, but by a special secretary; they are sealed with the Pope's own ring, the fisherman's signet.

A Cartel is an agreement between belligerents as to the conditions of war; it now applies especially to conventions for the exchange of prisoners.

The difference between a Firman and a Hatti Sherif is, that though both are edicts of the Turkish Government, the former is signed by

any Minister, whereas the latter is approved by the Sultan himself, with his special mark, and is therefore supposed to be irrevocable. The distinction is as real as between a love letter and a marriage settlement.

Capitulations is the name given to the immunities and privileges granted three centuries ago to France by the Ottoman Porte as an act of temporary and voluntary generosity, but which have been since converted, by degrees, into a series of one-sided engagements which now absolutely bind the Porte towards all the Powers. The same appellation was also bestowed on the conventions with the Swiss cantons, by which Holland, Spain, the Popes, the kings of Naples, and all the kings of France, from Louis XI. to Charles X., have taken Swiss regiments into their service.

A Concordat is a treaty with the Holy See on religious questions; it is strictly limited to the settlement of relations between Church and State. The name is never given to purely political conventions concluded by the Pontifical Government (as, for instance, the treaty of Tolentino), which are regarded as ordinary diplomatic acts in which the Pope stipulates as a temporal sovereign. In Concordats, on the contrary, he appears as Sovereign Pontiff, as chief of Catholicity.

It has become rather difficult to draw any certain line between a Congress and a Conference: in theory, however, a Congress has the power of deciding and concluding, while a Conference can only discuss and prepare. Thus the Conferences of Moerdyk and Gertrudenburg simply prepared the way for the treaties of Utrecht, while the Congresses of Munster, Aix-la-Chapelle, Rastadt, Erfurt, Prague, Châtillon, Vienna, Laybach, and Verona, were all more or less direct in their action and results. There are, how-

ever, recent examples of Conferences which have terminated in treaties, and that is why the distinction between the two appellations has ceased to be so absolute as once it was.

The difference between a Nation and a State is rather a question of grammar than of forms; but it may as well be mentioned, so as to furnish the two examples of it which are always quoted by professors of international law. A State may be made up of several nations, as in the case of the Austrian Empire. A Nation may perhaps not constitute an independent State, as was the case in Italy before 1859.

An Exequatur is an ordinance by which a sovereign authorises a foreign consul to discharge the functions which are confided to him. The form of exequaturs varies. In most countries it is a letter-patent signed by the sovereign and countersigned by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In others, the consul is simply informed that he is recognised as consul, as in Denmark; or the word *exequatur* is written on the back of his commission, as in Austria.

An Act of Abdication may be in any form which the abdicator likes to use; the process is supposed to be so unpleasant that the publicists are kind enough not to add to its annoyances by imposing a general model for the use of departing monarchs. Charles Albert of Sardinia profited by this liberty to sign his withdrawal before a village notary, who was pleased to draft it in the technical Italian to which his avocations had accustomed him, just as if it had been the deed of sale of a manufactory of local cheese. Still, since Diocletian set the sad example, there have been so many royal resignations — sixteen of reigning sovereigns during the last 300 years, from Charles the Fifth to

Amadeus — that the authors, who are so precise on other points, really ought to consider it to be their disagreeable duty to provide a fixed wording for the declarations of departure of unsuccessful rulers.

Manifestoes and Proclamations are written in the first person, and are signed by the sovereign who issues them; Declarations, on the contrary, are in the third person, and are signed by a Minister.

We will finish this long list by the most curious fact of all. Letters of abolition, remission, or legitimisation are sealed with green wax, because — so, at least, De Cussy tells us — that colour expresses youth, honour, beauty, and especially liberty. It may, however, reasonably be doubted whether all these properties really belong to green sealing-wax; for, if they did, there are ladies in the world who would employ it in large quantities.

Examples of many other special forms might be added, but they would not be very useful, and would take up room, and, furthermore, the effort of discussing them with reverential gravity is too great to be continued. Before we go on to the larger features of the question, we must allude, however, to one blank in the great mass of types and illustrations which are laid before students in the treatises on forms. There positively exists no model for a declaration of war! The aggressive nation is absolutely free to choose the shape in which it will announce hostilities; it is bound by no practice and no precedent. It may send a herald in a tabard to blow a horn at the gates of its coming foe; or it may publish a manifesto to Europe full of commanding evidence that its adversary is altogether in the wrong, and declaring that, though it would give anything to remain at peace, it is really forced to fight against its



will; or it may adopt any intermediate solution between these two, or no solution whatever, for it is no longer considered obligatory to formally declare war at all. It is a sign of the times that we should be drifting into utter negligence and bad manners on a point on which our ancestors were so remarkably punctilious and polite. But, if the formalists permit us to commence combats without any particular warning to the other side, they make up for this omission by defining with the strictest care the classes and categories of war. On this element of the question their love of definition and analysis comes out in all its strength; they elaborate it with such completeness that they are able to indicate to us nineteen sorts of war! Until they are enumerated it is difficult to imagine what the nineteen differences may be; but here is the list itself, to prove that the number is correct. There may be wars of independence, insurrection, revolution, conquest, or intervention, and these sections are subdivided into offensive, defensive, or auxiliary; public, private, or mixed; perfect or imperfect; legal or illegal; religious or political; national or civil. That makes nineteen! As the French say, "We may take down the ladder after that;" no one will try to climb any higher in that direction.

Letters of credence constitute a subject by themselves in the text-books, and naturally fill a quantity of pages. There are two main species of them: they may be special,—that is, for certain objects only; or general, which means that they extend to all sorts of negotiations. In either case they may be limited or unlimited; the combination of the two qualities of general and unlimited constitutes what are called *pleins pouvoirs*. There is no universal formula for them; but

there are certain accepted general characters which are usually adopted—at all events, in Europe. Klüber tells us, with evident satisfaction at having so many Latin words to print, that they may be in the form of letters patent (*in formâ patente*), in which case they are "powers" properly so called (*mandatum procuratorium*); or they may be sealed (*in formâ literarum*), and then constitute *lettres de créance* (*litteræ fidei*); or they may unite both these conditions in the same letter. Or again, as used to be done in France before the Revolution, they may both be given separately to the same Ambassador, who, in that event, presents the open letter at his public reception, and the sealed letter at his first private audience of the Sovereign. Formerly there was another class of powers, called *actus ad omnes populos*, which authorised an Ambassador to treat with all the States with which he might come in contact. The English Minister at the Hague received a power of this do-everything-with-everybody kind in 1713, in order to enable him to negotiate with the representatives of all the Governments interested in the Congress of Utrecht. All powers, of whatever category they be, cease to be valid on the death either of the sovereign who sent them or of the sovereign who received them; and, strictly, diplomatic communications ought, in one or other of these events, to be suspended until new powers arrive; but, in practice, as such a suspension would be inconvenient, the old credentials are fictively supposed to remain in force. Nuncios and Legates are, however, exempted from the necessity of a renewal of their credentials on the accession of a new Pope; the reason being that, according to the theory of the Chancellerie of Rome, the Pope does not die. It is in virtue of the

same principle of the continuous and impersonal authority of the Holy See, that no mourning is ever worn by European Courts for a deceased Pontiff. In addition to the regular letters of credence, a Monarch frequently gives *lettres d'adresse*, which are private letters of recommendation, to his ambassadors. And there is one more form connected with this element of the subject : answers to letters of recall are called *lettres de récréance*.

Correspondence between sovereigns is a matter which is approached with much solemnity, and spoken of with deep reverence by the authors. This disposition is very comprehensible on the part of professors of etiquette, but it is natural that we ordinary people should regard this element of the subject as a simple form, like all the rest. Not as one form, however, but as three ; for royal letters are divided rigorously into three categories — *Lettres de Conseil*, *Lettres de Cabinet*, and *Lettres autographes*—the destination and the composition of each of which classes of communication are accurately defined. Letters of the first category are employed in cases where strict ceremonial is observed : they commence by a repetition of the titles of the sovereign who writes, and almost always finish by the phrase, “ Sur ce Nous prions Dieu qu'il Vous ait, très-haut, très-puissant, et très-excellent Prince, notre très-aimé bon frère (ami, cousin, allié) en sa sainte et digne garde.” It should be noticed that a President of republic is not called by these tender titles, but that he is simply “ grand et bon ami.” In letters of this class all personal pronouns referring to the sender or the receiver are written in the plural, with their initials in capitals ; they are dated at the bottom, on the left side ; they are generally countersigned by the

Foreign Minister ; they are drafted on the largest possible paper, enclosed in the largest possible envelope, and sealed with the largest possible seal. A letter of the second class is more personal : it begins by “ Sire,” if the sovereign written to be superior to the sovereign who writes ; or by “ Monsieur mon Frère ” in other cases. The writer speaks of himself in the singular ; the letter is not countersigned ; the paper, envelope, and seal, though still enormous, are considerably smaller than in the former case. Finally, in autograph letters, the sovereign becomes almost human ; he writes them all himself, *manu propria* ; they have no official character, but they possess the most extraordinary elasticity of meaning, for we are told that they are considered to be a sign of deference to a superior, of friendship to an equal, and of particular affection and regard to an inferior. Hard as the times now are for kings, they have, at all events, an advantage over their subjects in this one affair of letter-writing ; none of us could anyhow express all this variety of conflicting sentiments by a simple note. The private letters of the Pope, written by his own hand, have a special name ; they are called *motus proprii*. He always begins his letters to Catholic sovereigns, even when he writes in French, by putting his own name in Latin, and then comes the invariable phrase, “ Carissime in Christo fili noster ! Salutem et apostolicam benedictionem ! ” The usual ending of such letters is, “ Nous vous donnons, de tout notre cœur, notre bénédiction paternelle.” Sovereigns writing to the Pope finish, ordinarily, by the phrase, “ Sur ce je prie Dieu, très Saint Père, qu'il vous conserve longues années aux Gouvernement de notre mère la Sainte Eglise.—Votre dévoué fils.” When royal letters are



addressed to equals or inferiors, the titles of the writer are indicated in the heading, and precede those of the recipient; but if an inferior prince communicates with a sovereign, he states his own titles at the bottom of the letter, reserving the top for the catalogue of honours belonging to the monarch to whom he writes. If a private person addresses royalty, he must use the largest possible paper which his country can supply; the writing must be of a hugeness proportioned to the paper; and it is absolutely essential that he should not inscribe more than four lines on the first page to a king or queen, or six lines to a prince or princess; it would be grossly contrary to etiquette to exceed these limits. The letter must conclude by the following formula, written in detached lines: "Jesuis—Sire—de Votre Majesté—le très humble, très obéissant, et très respectueux serviteur (et fidèle sujet);" or, to a Prince, "Je suis, avec un profond respect—Monseigneur—de Votre Altesse Royale (Impériale, Sérénissime)—le très humble et très obéissant serviteur." It is probable that most people will feel somewhat glad, on reading these particulars, that they are not in frequent correspondence with Continental sovereigns. In France there is, or rather used to be, a special habit of using the third person, saying *le Roi* instead of *Votre Majesté*. Thus, for instance, "Je prends la liberté de faire observer au Roi."

Diplomatic correspondence, properly so called—that is to say, the business correspondence exchanged between Ministers and Ambassadors—is precisely like any other sort of letter-writing. Even De Martens, the universal illuminator of the subject, the special torch-bearer in diplomatic fogs, cannot manage to point out a substantial difference between this sort of epistolary cor-

respondence and any other. It is, however, terribly humiliating to acknowledge, as we are forced to do, on the faith of two centuries of various authors, that the representatives of nations, whose letters are called despatches, and are carried by special couriers, are obliged to write in the same language as common people who are not ambassadors; and that they possess no distinguishing style which belongs to themselves alone, and separates them from the mob which uses postage-stamps. Even in the beginnings and the endings of their missives—those tests of Continental courtesy—Ministers and Envoys do not get much beyond the forms of daily life. If, in writing to each other, they address a Minister who is a mere Count, or less, they say *Excellence*, or *Monsieur le Ministre*, as the case may be; but if he has a title above that of Count, it is always given to him in preference to Minister. Since Prince von Bismark has risen to his present rank, all letters to him in French begin with "Prince;" official communications addressed to the Duc de Broglie or the Duc Decazes commence in the same manner, by *Monsieur le Duc*. It would be contrary to usage to call a prince or duke by the inferior denomination of *Monsieur le Ministre*. These letters finish, as they begin, by formalities of which diplomacy has no monopoly, and in what is, for the Continent, a very everyday sort of fashion. Their terminations, which are sometimes longer than the letter itself, oscillate between two extremes, from the simple expression of distinguished sentiments, up to "I beg your Excellency to be pleased to accept, with regard, the assurances of the feelings of most high and respectful consideration with which I have the honour to be, Monsieur le Duc, of your

Excellency, the very humble and very obedient servant." The Germans, it is true, do get into learned shades and delicate distinctions in their official correspondence; but they do just the same all day long between themselves. *Wohlgeboren*, *Hochgeboren*, *Hochwohlgeboren*, and *Edelgeboren*, are no special property of diplomacy,—they belong to the entire fatherland.

It is, partly, to regulate the wording of addresses and of the ends of letters that the Protocol department is established in so many ministries of foreign affairs. All correspondence of a specially official nature is prepared in that department, where alone the science of perorations and the pure traditions of ceremonious superscriptions are supposed to be preserved and handed on from generation to generation. We English people, who content ourselves with "Sincerely yours," and who look upon all expansive signatures as ridiculous exaggerations, are unable to comprehend the gravity which questions of this kind assume in certain Continental minds. We fail to seize the finely graduated merits of all the varied shapes of epilogues to letters which our neighbours use. They, however, all over Europe, have been brought up to appreciate and to feel the symmetrical differences of their meanings; and they detect fine multiplicities of expression in phrases which, to our unhabituated minds, represent nothing but a comical accumulation of idle words. Voltaire affected to be of our way of thinking: he attacked the forms of writing of his time when he said,—"César et Pompey s'appelaient César et Pompey; mais ces gens là ne savaient pas vivre. Ils finissaient leurs lettres par vale, adieu; nous étions, nous autres, il y a soixante ans, 'affectionnés serviteurs'; nous sommes devenus 'très humbles et

très obéissants;' et, actuellement, 'nous avons l'honneur de l'être.' Je plains notre postérité; elle ne pourra que difficilement ajouter à ces belles paroles." And yet the examples which have just been quoted, prove that we have added a good deal to what Voltaire thought was already so excessive. Madame de Genlis saw the subject in another light: she defended the use of deferential and courteous expletives, especially towards women. The picture which she gives of Voltaire's time differs a good deal from his. She says: "Les hommes donnaient le Monseigneur aux Maréchaux de France, et finissaient, 'je suis, avec respect.' Les femmes disaient aussi Monseigneur, mais gardaient le respect pour les vieux parents et pour les princes. Avec des égaux on signait, 'j'ai l'honneur d'être votre'; avec les inférieurs, 'je suis, avec une parfaite considération'; et avec tout ce qu'il y a de plus inférieur, 'je suis très parfaitement votre.' Tous les hommes, même les princes du sang, devaient placer le mot 'respect' dans les lettres écrites aux femmes. Du temps de Louis XIII. on disait à la fin des lettres qu'on 'était avec passion.'" In all this there is but one phrase which is really worthy of our memory; that one, however, is a lesson in itself;—"all men placed the word 'respect' in the letters they wrote to women." It would be a good thing for ourselves to do the same. Throughout Europe this custom still lives on; in England only we take no heed of it. Even the Frenchman of to-day offers his "respectful homage" to every lady to whom he writes a note. It is but an empty phrase; but it marks out, by its two words alone, the line of separation between those who have a right to claim respect and those who are bound to offer it. Could we not adopt it?



We have now glanced through the significations and the applications of some of the forms employed in international communications, and can pass on, at last, to the great, the essential subject of diplomacy, to the ultimate reason of its action—treaties. But here it must at once be owned, that if we were to limit our attention to the forms which European treaties have generally assumed, we should find them very dull and business-like, with scarcely anything in them that looks like vanity of talk, especially during the last two centuries. They offer but little curious wording, with no conceits and no pretensions of composition; and if there were not a special field open to our observation outside Christianity, we should have to leave out this element of the subject altogether, for its European aspects would not contribute anything—or at least scarcely anything—to the study of international vanities. But when we look into the treaty-forms employed by the Mohammedan powers, or by certain small barbarians whose names are unknown to history, we find strange phrases and odd imaginations which contribute most abundantly to the general catalogue of the world's pride. Before we quote examples of those types of wordings, it may, however, be as well to indicate a few of the main details connected with the actual preparation of European treaties. And first of all, it is worth while to note that, properly, the word Treaty is applied exclusively to political and commercial objects; while the less pretentious though longer denomination of Convention is bestowed on special agreements of all kinds—as, for instance, international arrangements about postage, telegraphs, or literary rights. It should also be observed that, in modern times, a marked tendency

has grown up to simplify the phrasings and the forms of treaties. The religious invocations, the long enumerations of the titles of the high contracting parties, with which, in former days, treaties invariably commenced, have now almost disappeared in Europe. In our day of freedom from all prejudice, ambassadors and their employers rarely think it necessary to place their work under divine protection; they have very nearly given up the once universal heading, "In the name of the Most Holy and indivisible Trinity." The Paris treaty of 1856 is almost the only one made in this generation which contains any dedication; it begins, exceptionally, with the words, "Au nom de Dieu tout Puissant." This oriental form was, however, probably adopted out of compliment to the prejudices of Turkey—the only party to the treaty which seems to retain a sentiment of the utility of an external recognition of divine guardianship. Christian powers—judging from their present general practice—consider such ejaculations as quite out of place in international agreements. There was a time when, in addition to the heading, treaties generally contained a preamble of prayer; but since the Peace of Utrecht that sort of prologue has gone out of fashion. The document signed on that occasion began with the following sentence: "Considering that it has pleased the Almighty and Merciful God, for the glory of His holy name, and for the peace of the human race, to inspire princes with the reciprocal desire of reconciliation." In our days we go straight to the subject-matter, without stopping on the road to invoke considerations which, we evidently suppose, are better in their place in a prayer-book. Mussulmans think otherwise, as we shall see directly. Another and more comprehen-

sible simplification is the suppression of the practice of giving hostages for the execution of a treaty. It is not much more than a hundred years ago, however, that England sent several peers to Paris, on the conclusion of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, as security for the restoration of Cape Breton to France. Signatures, too, have become easy to arrange, since the system of alphabetical order has been adopted; but in former times, when the fight for precedence was at its height, this element of the subject was a cause of grievous difficulty. The plan then was, to arrange the signatures in two columns: the top place in the right column (in the heraldic sense of right—that is to say, the reader's left) was the place of honour; the top place in the other column was the second,—and so on alternately.

The conditions of validity of treaties constitute a form of a large and special kind. The first of those conditions is, that a treaty shall be in conformity with the laws of every state which is a party to it; free and reciprocal consent constitutes the second condition; possibility of execution is the third (it should be explained that previous engagements or damage to the rights of a third party create impracticability of execution). A treaty signed by plenipotentiaries is valid if the signers have not exceeded their powers; and no posterior ratification is required, unless—which, however, is usually the case—it is expressly reserved in the treaty itself. Rigorously, an act of ratification ought to reproduce the entire treaty; but in modern practice, especially in German chanceries, the title, preamble, and first and last article, are alone transcribed. Another detail is, that the action of a treaty commences at its date, without reference to the date of the ratification. A treaty concluded by a sovereign

while he is a prisoner of war is not considered by the publicists to be binding on the state: it is regarded simply as a "sponson," which is an engagement to do one's best to obtain the ratification of the state. Some authors go infinitely beyond this, and allege that all treaties made with vanquished nations are, by their very nature, null; not exactly because they are imposed by force, but because one of the parties to them is considered as not possessing its full rights, and to be consequently incapable, legally, of giving its complete consent. This view supplies another example of the subtle, seeking, twisting spirit of the writers on International Law, and helps to make us think, as a good many people wisely do, that in reality, notwithstanding all the volumes that have been composed about it, there is no such thing as International Law at all. Theoretically a treaty is inviolable: all the authors talk of the *sanctitas pactorum gentium publicorum*; of *pacta eterna et realia*;—the practical meaning of all which is, that, though it is very wrong indeed, states do sometimes put an end to treaties.

It may be said that, in principle, all treaties are made by plenipotentiaries. There are, however, some examples of the contrary,—of the direct intervention of monarchs; the latest case on record being the Holy Alliance of 1815, which was personally agreed in Paris between the sovereigns of Austria, Russia, and Prussia. Most of the other European Powers adhered to it later on; but England remained outside it, because the Prince Regent was prevented by the Constitution from accepting a treaty which was not signed by a responsible Minister. But whether treaties be negotiated by an Emperor or an Envoy, they cannot escape from the classification of the formalists; they



must belong to one of the five admitted species—principal, lesser principal, accessory, additional, or subsidiary! And lest unimaginative persons should hastily and imprudently imagine that these five categories include all the definitions of bargains between nations, let it be at once declared that, according to the very latest writers, there are seventeen other sorts, each of which is susceptible of individual subdivisions to an almost indefinite extent, as will be seen by a reference to the text-books. These seventeen main secondary classifications are,—treaties of peace; of guarantee; of protection; of neutrality; of alliance (offensive or defensive); of friendship; of subsidy; of association; of confederation; of limits and frontiers; of cession or exchange; of jurisdiction; of navigation and commerce; of extradition; of literary, artistic, and industrial property; of posts, telegraphs, or railways; and of religion (concordats). It will be recognised that the ground is large. Missionary enterprise is generally considered to offer much diversity of occupation to those who follow it, in consequence of the extreme variety of sorts of pagans; but really this list indicates that diplomatists have before them a field of action which presents an almost equal choice.

Now we can go on to the examples of Eastern forms. There are a great many of them in the collections of treaties, but it is not difficult to pick out those which supply the completest types of the various classes of composition. One main feature strikes us in them all;—Asiatics employ religious language in their treaties with a persistence and an earnestness of which no example exists elsewhere; but, unfortunately, they do not limit themselves to prayer and to legitimate appeals for divine protection,—they

go a very long way further, and mix up official vanity and official piety with a thoroughness of promiscuity which Europeans have never practised with the same perfection in public documents. The difference between Mussulmans and ourselves on this point is, that what they do nationally we do individually. In reality there is vastly more of this peculiar mixture with us than with them, only we use it differently: they put it into treaties, while we exhibit it in pews: with them it is an article for state use in dealing with other countries; with us, the operation of amalgamating vain-glory and devotion is triumphantly performed all over England every Sunday morning by gentlemen and ladies acting for their own account. How much better it would be if we left it to the Government, as the Turks do!

Of all the models of a purely oriental document, the renewal made in 1740 of the capitulations between France and Turkey is certainly the most complete and striking; of all the specimens of its class, it is the most florid and the most exaggerated. It may therefore be indicated as a thoroughly typical example of the official phraseology of the East, and its preamble, though it is very long, may be usefully translated here. The document is headed by a star, and then begins:—

“The Emperor Sultan Mahmoud, son of the Sultan Moustapha, always victorious.

“This is what is ordered by this glorious and imperial sign, conqueror of the world, this noble and sublime mark, the efficacy of which proceeds from the divine assistance.

“I, who by the excellence of the infinite favours of the Most High, and by the eminence of the miracles filled with benediction of the chief of the prophets (to whom be

the most ample salutations, as well as to his family and his companions), am the Sultan of the glorious Sultans ; the Emperor of the powerful Emperors ; the distributor of crowns to the Cosroes who are seated upon thrones ; the shade of God upon earth ; the servitor of the two illustrious and noble towns of Mecca and Medina, august and sacred places, where all Mussulmans offer up their prayers ; the protector and master of holy Jerusalem ; the sovereign of the three great towns of Constantinople, Adrianople, and Brusa, as also of Damascus, the odour of Paradise ; of Tripoli in Syria ; of all Arabia ; of Africa ; of Barca," . . . and eight other cities, . . . "particularly of Bagdad, capital of the Caliphs ; of Erzeroum the delicious," . . . and eleven other places ; "of the isles of Morea, Candia, Cyprus, Chio, and Rhodes ; of Barbary and Ethiopia ; of the war fortresses of Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis ; of the isles and shores of the White and the Black Sea ; of the country of Natolia and the kingdoms of Roumelia ; of all Kurdistan and Greece ; of Turcomania, Tartary, Circassia, Cabarta, and Georgia ; of the noble tribes of Tartars, and of all the hordes which depend thereon ; of Caffa and other surrounding districts ; of all Bosnia and its dependencies ; of the fortress of Belgrade, place of war ; of Servia, and also of the fortresses or castles which are there ; of the countries of Albania ; of all Walachia and Moldavia, and of the forts and battlements which are in those provinces ; possessor, finally, of a vast number of towns and fortresses, the names of which it is unnecessary to enumerate and boast of here ; I, who am the Emperor, the asylum of justice, and the king of kings, the centre of victory, the Sultan son of Sultans, the Emperor Mahmoud, son of Sultan Mous-

tapha, son of Sultan Muhammed ; I, who, by my power, origin of felicity, am ornamented with the title of Emperor of the two Earths, and, to fill up the glory of my Caliphate, am made illustrious by the title of Emperor of the two Seas."

There ends the description of the Turkish monarch : the document then turns westward, and begins to designate the King of France, who is catalogued as follows : "The glory of the great princes of the faith of Jesus ; the highest of the great and the magnificent of the religion of the Messiah ; the arbitrator and the mediator of the affairs of Christian nations ; clothed with the true marks of honour and of dignity ; full of grandeur, of glory, and of majesty ; the Emperor of France and of the other vast kingdoms which belong thereto ; our most magnificent, most honoured, sincere, and ancient friend, Louis XV., to whom may God accord all success and happiness, having sent to our august Court, which is the seat of the Caliphate"—(here we revert to Turkey)—"a letter containing evidences of the most perfect sincerity, and of the most particular affection, candour, and straightforwardness ; and the said letter being destined to our Sublime Porte of felicity, which, by the infinite goodness of the incontestably majestic Supreme Being, is the asylum of the most magnificent Sultans, and of the most respectable Emperors ; the model of Christian Seigneurs, able, prudent, esteemed, and honoured minister, Louis, Marquis de Villeneuve, his Councillor of State and his Ambassador to our Porte of felicity (may the end thereof be filled up with joy), has demanded the permission to present and hand in the aforesaid letter, which has been granted to him by our imperial consent, conformably to the ancient usage of our Court ; and conse-



quently, the said ambassador having been admitted before our imperial throne, surrounded with light and glory, he has given in the afore-said letter, and has been witness of our Majesty in participating in our power and imperial grace; and then the translation of its loving meaning has been presented, according to the ancient custom of the Ottomans, at the foot of our sublime throne, by the channel of the most honourable El Hadji Mehemmed Pacha, our first Minister; the absolute interpreter of our ordinances; the ornament of the world; the preserver of good order amongst peoples; the ordainer of the grades of our Empire; the instrument of the glory of our crown; the road of the grace of royal majesty; the very virtuous Grand Vizier; very venerable and fortunate Minister, lieutenant-general, whose power and prosperity may God cause to triumph and to endure." Then begins the treaty, which goes on through eighty-five articles, and finishes with these words: "On the part of our imperial Majesty I engage myself, under our most sacred and most inviolable august oath, both for our sacred imperial person and for our august successors, as well as for our imperial viziers, our honoured pachas, and, generally, all our illustrious servitors who have the honour and the felicity to be in our slavery, that nothing shall ever be permitted contrary to the present articles."

The English capitulations, which were signed at the Dardanelles in 1809, contain some wording of the same kind, but they are not comparable to the foregoing; nowhere else, indeed, do we find another example at all approximating to the superb bombast of this one. The Persian wordings do not approach its outrageous vanity, but speci-

mens of them are worth giving. The firman of the Shah annexed to the treaty of 1801 with Great Britain begins with "The earth is the Lord's. Our august commands are issued that the high in rank, the exalted in station, the great rulers, &c., do cheerfully comply and execute the sense and meaning of what has been established." And the treaty of 1814 commences with a sentence which merits mention: its heading is, "Praise be to God, the all-perfect and all-sufficient. These happy leaves are a nosegay plucked from the thornless garden of concord, and tied by the hands of the plenipotentiaries of the two great states in the form of a definitive treaty, in which the articles of friendship and amity are blended." In another place a firman is spoken of as being "equal to a decree of fate," which is a somewhat strong simile, even for a Persian. The Persian style does not grow modern, it keeps up its local colour; for even as late as the year 1855, in the treaty then made with France, we find the following designations: "In the name of the clement and merciful God. His High Majesty, the Emperor Napoleon, whose elevation is like that of the planet Saturn; to whom the sun serves as a standard; the luminous star of the firmament of crowned heads; the sun of the heaven of royalty; the ornament of the diadem; the splendour of standards, imperial ensigns; the illustrious and liberal monarch;—and his majesty elevated like the planet Saturn; the sovereign to whom the sun serves as a standard; whose splendour and magnificence are like those of the heavens; the Sublime Sovereign; the Monarch whose armies are as numerous as the stars; whose greatness recalls that of Djemschid; whose magnificence equals that of Darius, heir of the crown and

throne of the Keyanians, the sublime and absolute Emperor of all Persia." It will be observed, that whereas the compliments paid to himself by the Sultan are mainly moral and territorial, the forms of self-adoration adopted by the Shah are astronomical and historical. It would be curious to follow up this difference to its roots, and to seek out the peculiarities of national character which lead a Turk to talk of his dominions and his virtues, and a Persian to quote his ancestors and the solar system.

The Chinese forms are very simple: as, however, the treaties with the Celestial Empire have all been drafted by Europeans, and have been simply signed by the Chinese, we possess no specimen of their diplomatic formulas, and can only judge their phrasings by such edicts as have come into our possession. They are all tolerably alike, are very practical, and the only peculiar point about them is that they invariably finish by the words, "respect this."

The Barbary States present differences of style which are somewhat difficult to explain amongst close neighbours of analogous origin. The Bey of Tunis is alternately flowery and pious; to France he says, in his treaty of 1830: "In the name of the clement and merciful God. This treaty, which fulfils all wishes, and which conciliates, with God's aid, so many diverse interests, has been concluded between the wonder of the princes of the house of the Messiah; the glory of the peoples who adore Jesus; the august offshoot of the blood of kings; the crown of monarchs; the resplendent object of admiration to his armies and his ministers;—Charles X., Emperor of France; by the intermediary of his Consul-General and Chargé d'Affaires at Turin, Matthieu de Lesseps; and

the prince of peoples; the chosen of the great; issued from royal blood; brilliant with the most flashing signs and the sublimest virtues; Hussein Pacha Bey, Master of the Kingdom of Africa." To England the Bey has spoken in less vivid but more religious words, as suits a nation of our supposed respectability. His declaration of April 1826 is the grandest document which he has addressed to us; and yet it does not get beyond these hymn-like phrases, "Praise be to God, to whom all things belong. By the servant of God Almighty, whose pardon and grace he implores, and in whom he trusts, Hassan Bashaw Bey, Lord of the Regency of Tunis and its dependencies in Africa, protected by God and imploring His pity." But when he turns back to the vain and frivolous French, the Bey diminishes the pious talk which he thought was so particularly fitted to Great Britain, and resumes personal glorifications. In the telegraph convention of 1859 he said: "Praises to God alone. The present blessed convention, if it pleases God in the highest, shall insure advantages to the subjects of the two high contracting parties. It has been established between the very High, the very Eminent, the offshoot of glorious sovereigns; the sustainer of great princes; who is obeyed by swords and pens; His High Majesty, Napoleon III., Emperor of the French, represented by, &c., and His Highness, the descendant of generous princes; the Elect of the Emirs; the very High Mouchir Mohammed-el-Sadoc, Bashaw Bey, possessor of the Kingdom of Tunis." The allusion to the obedience of swords and pens, to the entire subservience of steel in its most ancient and its most modern form, in its two most distant and distinct aspects of destruction and creation, is worthy of all our admiration. In



Morocco, forms are still more religious and still less pompous; they have a certain character of calm, which distinguishes them from all others. The English treaty of 1791 is a fair example of them; it says: "Praise be to God alone. This is a copy of the writing of the treaties of peace between the Lord of the Faithful; who is crowned Defender of the Law, by the grace of God of the universal world, that his prosperity may never be at an end; Mahomed-el-Mehidi-el-Yazid, whom God has crowned at the head of his troops, that his fame may be continued to be named in his dominions; and George the Third, King of England, in forty-three articles,"—and this is marked with a round seal bearing the words, "God of truth, crown the truth. There is only one God, and the Prophet Mahomet sent of God." The Dey of Algiers was the most laconic of the potentates of the Mediterranean shore. When he confirmed, in 1805, the treaties which his predecessors had made with France, he did it in these simple words: "The object of the present writing is what follows. Mustapha Pasha having been put to death, and his soul having passed to eternity, and His Highness Ahmed Pasha (whose desires may God fulfil) having replaced him in the dignity of Dey, the friendship, peace, and good intelligence between us, the French nation and its Emperor, have been maintained and confirmed conformably to the ancient treaties." And in 1814 an analogous declaration was sent to France in the following terms: "In the present year the chief of the French Government, Bonaparte, having abdicated, Louis XVIII., of the ancient race of kings (may his end be happy) has been elected Padishah in his stead. May you, Prince, by the aid of Jesus, Son of Mary, occupy the

throne of power with glory and felicity." Then follows a confirmation of existing treaties.

The same constant public invocation of religion comes out again in the firman of the Imaun of Sana, confirming, in 1824, the privileges of the French in his dominions. He says: "In the name of the clement and merciful God. By our generous and noble writings we insure and confirm to the French the privileges which were granted to them by our illustrious ancestors, and which they have enjoyed for long years in our flourishing town of Moka, the protected of God;" . . . and it ends,—"God suffices to us; we accept His will."

But when we turn to the English treaties with the Arab tribes round Aden, we get into a totally new class of diplomatic literature; we discover forms which are essentially proper to the district, and which possess a local perfume of the distinctest character. The treaty of 2d February 1839, with the chief of the Abdalees, is a good specimen of those singularly straight-spoken documents:—"From this day, and the future, Syed Mahomed Houssain bin West bin Hamed Suffran gives this promise to Commander Haines, gentleman, on his own head, in the presence of God, that there shall be friendship, lasting friendship, and peace, and everything good, between the English and the Abdalees. I promise no wrong or insult shall be done, but it shall be peace; and the British Government agrees to the same. Sultan Mahomed Houssain and all interior sultans agree to this, and I am responsible. All those even on the roads to the interior shall be kept from molesting any one by me, as they were when Sultan M. Hous-sain possessed Aden. This is agreed upon between me and Commander Haines on the part of Government;

and I promise to do even more than I have hitherto done, please God. I require respect from Commander Haines in return, and more than before, if possible." The French, however, obtained a far simpler bargain than even this when they made peace with the King of Guoy (Senegal) in 1858. That beaten potentate contented himself with saying: "The King of Guoy, recognising that without an alliance with the French there can be nothing but ruin and misery for himself and his family, demands peace, and gives up to France all the territory between Bakel and the Falémé."

One more specimen from the other side of the world is worth mentioning, before we close the list of exotic forms. When the Grand-Judge of Tahiti, Paofai, accepted the French protectorate of his country, he wrote the following letter to Admiral Dupetit-Thouars: "Mr Admiral, I salute and felicitate you on your arrival at Tahiti. This is what I want to say to you. I approve very much that the King of France takes Tahiti under his protection. I am satisfied because the demand has been made. I wish you to consider me as having written my name at the bottom of that demand. If you do not admit this, I shall be annoyed."

All these examples, both European and African or Asiatic, present characters which justify us in including diplomatic forms amongst the signs of the pride of nations. But as we could not get on at all without these forms; as the self-glorifying aspect which they so frequently assume is not in any way essential to themselves, but is a consequence of the uses which they are made to serve by kings, ministers, and diplomatists,—we ought perhaps

to regard them rather as a necessary article which is spoiled by the way it is handled, than as one of the inherent follies of the world. This view, indeed, is supported by the fact that vanity damages a good many other things as well as forms; all kinds of talents, small and great—from billiards, rope-dancing, and swallowing knives, to oratory, "salt-ing mines," cookery, and statesmanship—lead straight to vanity; the ownership of such purely accidental qualities of beauty, rank, or money, the possession of a good tailor, of a particular umbrella, of an unpublished chignon, are still more productive of the same result. All that we can say of forms, then, is, that they constitute no exception to the universal rule; that the vanity which we put so abundantly into everything around us springs up in them as in all else. The fault is in ourselves, not in the gifts which we possess, or in the tools which we employ. Bossuet and M. J. Chénier have told us this everlasting truth in words which are worth remembering: they said, the first, that "though God and nature have made men equal in forming them of the same mud, human vanity cannot suffer this equality;" the second, that "all is vanity, including majesty, and even love, which is a pity." We cannot, then, expect to exclude forms from its miscellaneous action. Vanity will live on; forms will continue to be employed; we can but indulge the hope that the two may be kept more apart as time goes on, and that the men whose trade it is to utilise the international elements of forms will endeavour to remember, in their application of them, that "everything on earth is vanity, except the good we do there."



## JOHN STUART MILL: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

THE rivals and contemporaries of the late Lord Campbell, when informed that it was the intention of that learned lord to write their lives, complained, with as much of bitterness as humour, that he had added a new pang to the terrors of death. The Lives of Lyndhurst and Brougham contained a faithful record of all that a jealous rival would be most likely to note with avidity; and shortly after its appearance, the uses of autobiography were amusingly illustrated, when Lord Brougham, by the aid of his executors, was enabled from the tomb to reply upon his noble friend, give his own version of his career, and impeach the evidence of the witness against him by arraigning his motives. Literature, however, can hardly be said to have gained in dignity or usefulness in that singular exhibition.

Autobiographies worthily undertaken, especially of men whose fame rests upon abstract speculation, are really valuable contributions to literature. They disclose to us, with many intrinsic guarantees of truthfulness which ordinary biographies do not possess, the formation of character and mind, and the degree in which capacities so obtained were adapted to, or controlled by, the opportunities of life. There are several public men of the present day, whose lives, written by themselves, would be of intense and absorbing interest to those who survive them. And where the motive of autobiography is so evidently in the interests of the public, as is this of the late Mr Mill, it is due to the memory of a great and distinguished man to judge it with

impartiality, treating it in the spirit of the bequest, regarding the interest of the "experiment in life" as superior to the record of its merely personal vicissitudes. No one could have given this narrative if Mr Mill had not done so; and both the motive for doing so, and the manner in which it has been accomplished, are proofs of the truthful character and purposes of its author, and are entitled to a grateful recognition of their fidelity and public spirit. Mr Mill's account of his life is simple and truthful, and free from all conscious egoism or self-assertion: he narrates his education and his career, and leaves posterity to take warning or encouragement according to its conscience and its judgment.

It is a marvellous story: the history of a life which from the first was isolated from mankind and human influences—of a mind which was artificially isolated from the very nature in which it was embedded—of a training which was forced, unnatural, and severe, and which crushed or stunted as much as it developed. Apparently from the cradle the object which the elder Mill set before him was to produce an intellect in its hardest, nudest form, free from all alloy of human feelings, whether of an animal or spiritual nature; which should be developed so as to be a quarter of a century in advance of its age; which should stand apart from society and its influences, from human nature and its contamination, the destined invader of the whole existing principles and organisation of society; and which should correct, as with a rod of iron, the strange

misconceptions, the false ideas, and the pernicious institutions which society had unconsciously formed and carelessly cherished.

The childhood of Mr Mill strikes us as inexpressibly sad. The central figure of the family group is a stern, austere, uncompromising Scotchman, whose inward repression of faith, and outward struggles with pecuniary difficulty, had hardened a nature which joined a vigorous understanding to a very contracted sympathy. We hear nothing of the mother; as for the numerous brothers and sisters, they are dismissed with slight observation upon their childhood, and are never again referred to. Nor were any of them known or heard of in society. Their teaching was confided to the child who was their elder brother, and he was responsible to his father for the manner in which they repeated their lessons, as well as for the way in which he learned his own. Such teaching was, as Mr Mill himself says, "very inefficient as teaching; and I well know that the relation between teacher and taught is not a good moral discipline to either." The probability is that they grew up in the ordinary and healthy way, with more of maternal care and less exaction from the father, and that between them and young Mill there was little love lost. The father evidently reserved to himself the eldest son, whose abilities and mind attracted his favour, in order, by dint of the most resolute and pertinacious effort, to form and endow intellect in its highest and most isolated form. In the attempt to do so, he made, in our opinion, as unflinching and unjustifiable an experiment as one human being ever yet made upon the life of another. That experiment was begun before the child was fairly out of the cradle; and we have preserved to us an exact

record of the successive steps by which it was effected.

Mr Mill had no remembrance of the time when he began to learn Greek, but was told that it was at the age of three years. From three to seven a list of Greek authors is given which he was bound to read and digest; his father demanding in all things "not only the utmost that I could do, but much that I could by no possibility have done." His infantine recreations were to walk with his father, narrating to him the substance of his last day's reading. A number of English histories were a substitute for childish play, and the story of the American war inspired his infantine fancy with the feeling of national partisanship, until he was set right by his father, and the instinctive sympathy with his countrymen was crushed by the domineering convictions of his hard-headed parent. The heavier studies of this unfortunate child included theories of English government, the vicissitudes of ecclesiastical history, and accounts of great men exhibiting energy and resource in struggling against unusual difficulties: "Of children's books any more than of playthings I had scarcely any, except an occasional gift from a relation or acquaintance." From eight to twelve a long list of Latin books taxed his energies and employed his time. Greek poets, Aristotle, geometry and algebra, the differential calculus, and other portions of the higher mathematics, were thrown in so that no time should be lost. In reference to mathematics he was under this additional difficulty that his father had forgotten them, and was unable to give him the necessary aid. True, however, to his principle of demanding "that which could by no possibility be done," the father continually visited his displeasure upon the son's inability



to solve problems, which were impossible, as the son is careful to record, through want of the necessary previous knowledge. Time, however, pressed ; for when the determined object—before which all instincts and motives, even those of humanity, must be sternly repressed—is to train a mind which shall be “a quarter of a century in advance,” even infantine minutes are precious. Accordingly, Roman, Grecian, and ancient universal history absorbed his hours of recreation. In his eleventh and twelfth year he wrote for his own amusement, besides other works, as much of a history of the Roman government as would have made an octavo volume, discussing all constitutional points, vindicating the agrarian laws, and upholding the Roman democratic party. Compulsory verse composition completed this bill of child-fare, which it must be admitted was one of overflowing liberality. We must add, however, that one of his greatest amusements was experimental science without the advantage of experiments ; and he devoured treatises on chemistry without attending a lecture or seeing an experiment. At the age of twelve he was advanced to the science of logic, beginning with the *Organon*. He read at the same time several of the Latin treatises on the scholastic logic, giving each day to his father during his walks a minute account of what he had read. Both father and son recognised the value of an early practical familiarity with the school logic. “The first intellectual operation in which I arrived at any proficiency was dissecting a bad argument and finding in what part the fallacy lay ; and though whatever capacity of this sort I attained was due to the fact that it was an intellectual exercise in which I was most perseveringly drilled by my father, yet it is also true that the

school logic, and the mental habits acquired in studying it, were among the principal instruments in this drilling.” Numerous Latin and Greek authors of the higher order were also read by him at this time ; and the book which contributed largely to his education was his father’s *History of India*, published in 1818, when Mill was twelve years old. In fact, the chief work of his twelfth year was to assist in the publication of this book. Next year, at the age of thirteen, he was taken through a complete course of political economy, the father delivering lectures during their walks, the son giving a written account of them the next day. In reading Adam Smith, his father made him apply the superior lights of Ricardo in order to detect what was fallacious in argument or erroneous in conclusion. “Such a mode of instruction was excellently calculated to form a thinker, but it required to be worked by a thinker as close and vigorous as my father. The path was a thorny one even to him, and I am sure it was so to me, notwithstanding the strong interest I took in the subject. He was often and much beyond reason provoked by my failures in cases where success could not have been expected ; but in the main his method was right, and it succeeded.”

Next year, when the young Mill had reached the age of fourteen, he left England for more than twelve months ; “and after my return, though my studies went on under my father’s general direction, he was no longer my schoolmaster.”

The purely educational experiment, the endeavour to stimulate by unnatural forcing the growth of pure intellect, was finished at fourteen. Throughout the whole of that time the successive stages of forced precocity had been such that neither school nor school life

was possible. The child was never fit to mix with children; he had absorbed and assimilated knowledge at a rate and in quantities which would, unless Mr Mill's recollections are altogether exaggerated, have made schoolmasters eject him with terror from their schools. He lived in a world of abstract principles and elaborate theories. Fit to converse on even terms with his father's friends, David Ricardo, Joseph Hume, and Mr Bentham, he could neither play a game nor form a friendship. In him metaphysics and analysis were incarnate; but the gulf between him and the world in which he lived was already impassable. Common-sense and current experience were absent; the hand and the heart were untaught; manners were unformed; while the feelings which flow from society and the intercourse of lives—the instincts which are born in us, or flow from contact with nature—were to all appearance stamped out of his very being by the iron heel of his father.

The effect of the education to the age of fourteen shows, according to Mr Mill, the ease with which knowledge, in what are considered the higher branches of education, can be imparted during childhood. He denies that he was by nature extremely quick of apprehension, or possessed a very accurate and retentive memory, or was of a remarkably active and energetic character. In those natural gifts he describes himself as rather below than above par.

"Mine, however, was not an education of cram. My father never permitted anything which I learnt to degenerate into a mere exercise of memory. He strove to make the understanding not only go along with every step of the teaching, but if possible precede it. Anything which could be found

out by thinking I never was told until I had exhausted my efforts to find it out for myself." This assertion, together with the statement that after the age of seven, the greater part of every day was consumed in teaching his brothers and sisters, incline us to receive with considerable doubt and hesitation the enormous list of books and subjects said to have been mastered during his childhood.

His father most anxiously guarded him against self-conceit, keeping him out of the way of hearing himself praised, or being led to make self-flattering comparisons between himself and others. Mill asserts with confidence that he did not estimate himself at all, either highly or lowly; his father having completely succeeded in preserving him from the sort of influences which he so much dreaded. But Mr Mill describes "the impression of various persons who saw me in my childhood. They, as I have since found, thought me greatly and disagreeably self-conceited; probably because I was disputatious, and did not scruple to give direct contradictions to things which I heard said. I suppose I acquired this bad habit from having been encouraged in an unusual degree to talk on matters beyond my age, and with grown persons, while I never had inculcated in me the usual respect for them. My father did not correct this ill-breeding and impertinence, probably from not being aware of it; for I was always too much in awe of him to be otherwise than extremely subdued and quiet in his presence."

It was at the close of this childhood education, on the eve of going abroad, that his father (the very place in Hyde Park where he did so being remembered by the son all his life) pointed out to him the superiority over all his contempo-



raries which he had derived from his training. The son felt that what his father said respecting his peculiar advantages "was exactly the truth and common-sense of the matter, and it fixed his opinion and feeling from that time forward." The frankness of this statement is well borne out by several passages in his book. There is abundant evidence in the exaggerated recollection of his childish achievements, in the implied meaning of his exalted compliments to his wife, in the estimate of his books, in his remarks upon his official relations and his relations to society, that notwithstanding some self-depreciatory observations, a consuming but not altogether obtrusive vanity had been developed during his childhood, and remained as the basis of his character through life.

Now let us examine the negative side of this marvellous training. The child was carefully kept from intercourse with other boys, in order to escape "the contagion of vulgar modes of thought and feeling." He paid the price of inferiority in schoolboy accomplishments. He had no holidays, and no boy companions. His daily leisure for amusement was devoted to occupations of a bookish turn. He was through life inexpert in anything requiring manual dexterity,—his mind as well as his hands did its work very lamely when applied to practical details, and he "was constantly meriting reproof by inattention, inobservance, and general slackness of mind in matters of daily life." His education was limited to training him to *know* rather than to *do*. The son's deficiencies arose from absence of school life; yet, both as a boy and as a youth, he smarted incessantly under his father's severe admonitions. "Here, as well as in some other points in my tuition, he

seems to have expected effects without causes."

It is impossible to imagine a state of more complete isolation from the life and the world which he was intended to regenerate. He was cast from his father's workshop, fearfully and wonderfully fashioned, upon a world of which he knew nothing in its ordinary experiences, daily life, and natural human interests and sympathies. The power of knowing men and characters, of understanding the real nature which had been crushed out of him, was lost and never afterwards acquired. In later life he knew no more of men and women than at fourteen he knew of school-boys.

The whole moral influence which centred upon the child appears, so far as this Autobiography reveals it, to have been exercised by the father. The mother's influence, at all events, is not remembered. The brothers and sisters are recalled as the unwilling victims of his instruction, who bored him and probably disliked him. Of companions and playfellows he had none. The father was ubiquitous, bent on moulding him, never relaxing his vigilance. "My father's senses and mental faculties were always on the alert; he carried decision and energy of character in his whole manner, and into every action of life, and this as much as his talents contributed to the strong impression which he always made upon those with whom he came into personal contact." Mill describes his father as having produced an enormous effect upon his character. He gravely exhorted or sternly reproved conduct with a view to "justice, temperance (to which he gave a very extended application), veracity, perseverance, readiness to encounter pain, and especially labour—regard for the public good, estimation of persons according to their merits, and of

things according to their intrinsic usefulness, a life of exertion in contradiction to one of self-indulgent ease and sloth." He was not insensible to pleasure, but he attributed the greater number of the miscarriages in life to the overvaluing of pleasure. He thought human life a poor thing at best, after the freshness of youth and of unsatisfied curiosity had gone by. For passionate emotions of all sorts he professed the greatest contempt. Feelings, as such, were no proper subjects of praise or blame; even a feeling of duty as a motive did not mitigate the severity of his censure upon what he considered a bad action. He was constitutionally irritable; and Mr Mill says "it is impossible not to feel true pity for a father who did and strove to do so much for his children, who would have so valued their affection, yet who must have been constantly feeling that fear of him was drying it up at its source. This was no longer the case later in life and with his younger children—they loved him tenderly; and if I cannot say as much of myself, I was always loyally devoted to him." Mr Mill pointedly says that he rejoices "in the decline of the old brutal and tyrannical system of teaching;" that fear ought not to be the main element in education; and that when it predominates so as to preclude love and seal up the fountains of frank communicativeness in the child's nature, it is an evil which detracts from the other educational benefits which may have been received.

The father looked upon religion "as the greatest enemy of morality, first by setting up fictitious excellences—belief in creeds, devotional feelings, and ceremonies not connected with the good of human kind—and causing them to be accepted as substitutes for genuine virtues; but above all, by radically vitiating the subject of morals."

Accordingly, Mill was brought up from the first without any religious belief. His father considered that the creed of Christianity embodied the *ne plus ultra* of wickedness in the conception which it presented of God. Mill describes himself as one of the very few examples in this country of one who has not thrown off religious belief, but never had it. "I grew up in a negative state with regard to it. I looked upon the modern exactly as I did upon the ancient religion, as something which in no way concerned me. It did not seem to me more strange that English people should believe what I did not than that the men whom I read of in Herodotus should have done so." The father, while implanting in the son an opinion contrary to that of the world, thought it necessary to give it as one which could not be prudently avowed. To the last, people were in doubt as to the late Mr Mill's religious belief or disbelief. He refused to say anything about it at his election at Westminster. This Autobiography dispels all obscurity upon the subject, and adds, that "the world would be astonished if it knew how great a proportion of its greatest ornaments, of those most distinguished even in popular estimation for wisdom and virtue, are complete sceptics in religion."

It is easy to see from the record of this education what the father's training had effected in point of formation or development. The subsequent years of life must be consulted in order to see what that training had crushed or smothered. Had his education been allowed to proceed in the ordinary healthy course, it is reasonable to conclude that Mill's life would have been fuller, happier, and more useful than it was. He had the ardent sympathies, the imaginative faculty, the love of nature, and the disposition



to worship and revere which would have united him to his kind. His father failed to crush them out, but he fixed a gulf between his son and the world which was never afterwards passed or passable; he made a gap in the child's character and capacities which was never afterwards filled up. Mill went through life fitted to excel in the pursuit of abstract science; but hopelessly wrong in his estimate of men and women, and unversed in practical life.

At the age of fourteen the pupil left his father's house and entered the world. No youth ever embarked on the voyage of life so singularly equipped. The abnormal development of intellect, joined to singular ignorance of life and all its incidents, rendered him a portent; but the fact that a rich vein of poetry, and a real tenderness of nature, lay beneath, oppressed but not driven out by the iron discipline he had endured, gives the real and enduring interest to the subsequent pages of the book. A year's residence in France under the care of Mr Bentham's brother, varied by an excursion to the Pyrenees, where "the mountain scenery made the deepest impression on me, and gave a colour to my tastes through life," afforded an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the French language and literature, and attending lectures on chemistry, zoology, and the philosophy of the sciences. The frank sociability and amiability of French personal intercourse evidently delighted him; and he contrasted French sentiment and sympathy with what he subsequently discovered to be the apathy and indifference of Englishmen.

From the age of fifteen onwards, when he first read Bentham and helped to start the 'Westminster Review,' he had what might be called an object in life—to be a

reformer of the world. For five years, that object and the happy consciousness of fulfilling it, formed the basis of his happiness, a permanent personal satisfaction on which to place his whole reliance. A dull state of nervous exhaustion then supervened; and the end in view ceased to charm. Life suddenly seemed without object, hope, or motive; the love of mankind in general did not compensate for the absence of all sympathy with any individual. The state of mind was one of deep and hopeless dejection. There was no hope of sympathy from his father; the stream of that father's education had ended in a mud-bank. Mill saw, or thought he saw, what he had always before received with incredulity—"that the habit of analysis has a tendency to wear away the feelings—as, indeed, it has when no other mental habit is cultivated, and the analysing spirit remains without its natural complements and correctives."

Analytic habits tend to weaken those associations which are mere matter of feeling. They are therefore favourable to prudence and clear-sightedness, but a perpetual worm at the root, both of the passions and of the virtues. The whole course of his education had made precocious and premature analysis the inveterate habit of his mind. He feared that he had not sufficient fund of feeling, natural or acquired, to resist its dissolving influence. He felt that he had no real desire for the ends which he had been trained to work for; "no delight in virtue, or the general good, but also just as little in anything else." As for vanity, ambition, the desire of distinction and importance, satiety had preceded desire. A morbid intellectual development had incapacitated him for physical, sympathetic, or sensual plea-

sures. "Thus neither selfish nor unselfish pleasures were pleasures to me; and there seemed no power in nature sufficient to begin the formation of my character anew, and create in a mind now irretrievably analytic, fresh associations of pleasure with any of the objects of human desire." For about a year his mood was hopeless and gloomy; he was oppressed with the thought that all feeling was dead within him. But he had been so drilled in a certain sort of mental exercise that he could still carry it on when the spirit had gone out of it. The gloom was first dispelled by the passage in Marmontel's *Memoirs* which relates the sudden inspiration to do and dare which was caused by his father's death and the distress of the family. Finally, he was led to adopt or to originate the anti-self-conscious theory of Carlyle. "Ask yourself whether you are happy, and you cease to be so; the only chance is to treat not happiness, but some end external to it, as the purpose of life." You must inhale happiness with the air you breathe; you will put it to flight by fatal questioning. He was also led to increased regard for the internal culture of the individual. Passive susceptibilities he found require to be cultivated as well as the active capacities. He thought that analysis required to be corrected by joining other kinds of cultivation with it. Unlike his father, he now insisted upon the cultivation of the feelings, and the maintenance of a due balance among the faculties. He awoke to the importance of poetry and art as instruments of human culture. From childhood he had taken infinite pleasure in music. The extremity of the morbid gloom into which he had been thrown is proved by nothing more thoroughly

than that even this source of pleasure was then closed to him. Reviving enjoyment in it was, after all, impeded by the circumstance that he was "seriously tormented by the thought of the exhaustibility of musical combinations."

The poetry of Wordsworth first gave him continued mental relief. He read the whole of Byron with the hope to rouse some feeling in himself, but unsuccessfully. Byron's state of mind, he says, was too like his own. "His was the lament of a man who had worn out all pleasures, and who seemed to think that life to all who possessed the good things of it must necessarily be the vapid uninteresting thing which I found it." Mill's gloom was that of a man who felt that the idiosyncrasies of his education had done for him what satiety had done for Byron—eaten out the capacity for pleasure, or enjoyment, or happiness. Wordsworth's poems, on the contrary, "expressed not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling, of thought coloured by feeling under the excitement of beauty. They seemed to be the very culture of the feelings which I was in quest of. In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure." Wordsworth taught him that there was real permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation; and that with culture of the feelings, there was nothing to dread from the most confirmed habit of analysis. He accepted the comfort of Wordsworth's poetry, but he rejected the philosophy and religion from which Wordsworth drew his inspiration.

The love of rural objects and natural scenery, and the passionate fondness for poetry and music which this *Autobiography* reveals, forced their way to light, notwithstanding the



incubus of his extraordinary training. It was the struggle of nature and the natural tendencies of his character and disposition, rebelling against the tyrannous weight of an exclusively intellectual development, which produced the deep melancholy to which we have referred, and which, it is hinted, almost terminated in suicide. When we reflect what the development was, it shows the strength and vigour of the man that he refused to remain the mere "reasoning machine" which his father had sought to make him. He showed thus early that he had by nature strong points of contact and sympathy with the outer world, and with that life of feeling and passion from which his father had tried to exclude him. The vital power within him had not been exhausted by the elaborate process of unnatural forcing. But enough had been done to determine his general career and character.

Previous to the crisis in his life which this melancholy created, his father had secured for him, at the age of seventeen, an appointment in the India House as Examiner of Correspondence. He retained this employment, becoming eventually the head of his department, until 1858, when, on the fall of the East India Company, he retired with a liberal compensation. He had in this way a competency, thorough independence of the world, sufficient leisure to pursue his schemes of attacking and revolutionising a social system which at least had treated him with singular generosity. It completed that isolation from life, its struggles and uncertainties, its priceless discipline and invigorating influence, which his father had begun. Mr Mill regards it as having given him personal observation of the conduct of public affairs, and as having obliged him to co-operate with others. He alludes with evident

satisfaction to the leading part which he played in determining the form and spirit of the despatches which were sent from the office. He found the discipline of being obliged to put up with the smallest part of his own way at the office, where he could not get the whole of it, as of the greatest possible importance for personal happiness. He was thereby, at the very lowest estimate of his achievements, effecting "the greatest amount of good compatible with his opportunities." The singular point in reference to his official career is this: that although India was governed, as respects the English machinery of its administration, by the most astounding contrivances ever resorted to for the rule of an empire, Mill never, during his whole thirty-five years, opened his mouth against it. He clung to all its abuses and absurdities with the same desperate tenacity with which the pseudo-Tories of his youth stuck to rotten boroughs and Draconian punishments. He declared that any change from such a system "would necessarily be a change for the worse,"—a strange sentiment for him.

When the Company fell, and with it the Directors, and the government of India was transferred to the Queen, he was the foremost to denounce "the folly and mischief of that ill-considered change." There was not an opinion nor an institution cherished by his countrymen which he, isolated from them by his education, his appointment, and his pursuits, did not attack with a view to its absolute extinction. But he knew no more of practical politics than he did of life and human beings; and any man or woman of competent knowledge of that world which was so strange to him and who appreciated him, and any institution like that of the India House, which used him

well, was liable to be invested with every imaginary excellence.

We pass lightly over the literary achievements of his life, as it is not within the compass of an article that the history of his mind or an account of his works can be given. In early youth he founded a sect, a debating club, and a Review, and he wrote countless articles on the subjects which fed his mind. In dealing with abstractions he was at home. His words, his theories, his phases of thought, his axioms, corollaries, and principles, we leave to others; our object is to estimate his career and education, and thence to ascertain his value as a leader of thought, the apostle of a new social condition, a new order of human duties, beliefs, and opinions.

The next subject is that large portion of his career which was illustrated and influenced by what he terms "the most valuable friendship of his life." In 1830, when he was twenty-five and Mrs Taylor was twenty-three, they became acquainted. "I very soon felt her to be the most admirable person I had ever known." The sequel shows that notwithstanding all his isolation and all his scientific training, the contempt of passionate emotion, and the desire to rebuild the world on a basis of pure reason by means of an intellect artificially forced, the human nature within him which had led him to the unhallowed delights of poetry, music, and scenery, was again at work. Incarnate analysis was in love, and, of course, with the wrong woman.

Mr Mill's relations to Mrs Taylor are an important part of his Autobiography, to the eye of any one who approaches the subject from our point of view. Mr Mill, in his work on the 'Subjection of Women,' has expressed his view of the relations of the sexes, and in particular of husbands and wives. He avow-

edly sought to transmute the existing institution of marriage, and called upon the whole female sex to revolt against it, as unworthy and to the lowest degree degrading. The Christian religion rests that institution upon the basis of the obedience of the wife, and it is perfectly consistent with that basis that the real relation should be, where circumstances permit, one of reciprocal superiority and mutual devotion. That basis must be broad enough to support indissolubility of marriage, which is the foundation of society: it does not exclude, but will, on the contrary, tend to promote, the highest development of woman. Mr Mill calls his friendship with Mrs Taylor "the honour and chief blessing of his existence," the source of his efforts for human improvement. For twenty years of that friendship Mrs Taylor was the wife of another man, estimable according to Mr Mill for everything but his intellectual and artistic tastes, for whom his wife "had true esteem and the strongest affection through life, and whom she most deeply lamented when dead." With this lady, so circumstanced, Mr Mill permitted himself to form a relation which he pointedly says was "one of strong affection and confidential intimacy only." It is hard upon a husband when his wife's honour needs this posthumous testimony from another man, and is supposed to receive it without reproach and discredit. It is stated, and may readily be believed, that the intimacy which Mill regarded as the honour of his existence, embittered the husband's life. The lady occasionally lived with her husband—mostly, however, away from him in the country. Mr Mill visited them equally in both places. He was "greatly indebted to the strength of character which enabled her to



disregard the false interpretations liable to be put on the frequency of his visits to her while living generally apart from Mr Taylor, and on their occasionally travelling together." Assuming that any limit existed to this intimacy, in reference to which Mr Mill and Mrs Taylor considered that "the ordinances of society were not binding upon a subject so entirely personal," we are astonished at the leniency of reviews upon this subject. The character in which Mr Mill writes this book is that of a reformer of the world. Marriage was the institution which he especially assailed. He prides himself ostentatiously on this friendship; he expresses no word of regret for the wrong done to the unfortunate husband, and no sense whatever of having violated any right: the tone towards Mr Taylor is that of patronising pity; and we say that, under these circumstances, this prolonged episode in his life demands the severest condemnation. It is true that some sense of sympathy with the man creeps in; but this ought not to blind us to the character of the transaction which Mr Mill pointedly and ostentatiously upholds as honourable and right. Despair of being able to recognise ordinary flesh and blood in a man who attributes deep and morbid dejection caused by an overstrained mind to the doctrine of philosophic necessity or to the supposed exhaustibility of musical combinations, vanishes at the discovery that he is deeply and passionately in love. Reassured in this way, the public is inclined to forget that this passionate worship (for such it was, and it is described by himself as the honour of his existence) was in violation of duties which society still holds sacred, but which apparently Mr Mill disowned and rejected. The Platonic nature of this attach-

ment in no wise affects the question. Husbands and wives who have "true esteem and strong affection," owe one another much more than mere legal loyalty. Marriage could never correspond to the high ideal which Mr Mill himself described, if avoiding the divorce court fulfilled all its conditions, and no demand were made for constancy and fidelity on the part of both husband and wife in mind, heart, and thought. We can put a guard, as a great master of human nature tells us, over our constancy as over our other treasures; and a woman who has esteem and affection for her husband has no right to sacrifice his happiness to her own intellectual improvement. Mrs Taylor claimed and exercised this right, and Mr Mill found the chief honour of his existence in enabling her to do so. The sincerity of spirit in which this Autobiography is written increases the importance of weighing carefully this portion of Mr Mill's life. He has not withheld a tribute to the worth of Mr Taylor. Nor has he condescended to disclose any extenuating circumstances. He regards the matter as purely personal to himself and Mrs Taylor. Thus a disregard of the obligations of marriage which so forcibly appears in the 'Subjection of Women' was not merely with him a principle, but, so far as his temperament permitted, a practice. We protest against both, and rejoice that this Autobiography reveals to its author's blind admirers the true spirit of some of his most advanced and most outrageous social theories. We assert, in utter reprobation of these theories, that the marriage contract, which lies at the foundation of society, demands that husband and wife shall give each other the utmost of help, companionship, and sympathy of which they are capable. If that tie between them is dissolved and formed by

either with a third party, the mere legal bond, even if inviolate, is worth no more than the chain which fastens one galley-slave to another. It is a striking illustration of the views propounded by Mr Mill in his lifetime upon this subject, to find that he and Mrs Taylor really believed that their partnership of thought and feeling, their relations of strong affection and confidential intimacy, inflicted no wrong or suffering upon the husband, for whom he had the "sincerest respect," and she, the "strongest affection," but, on the contrary, was regarded by both as the honour of their lives. A leader of thought may justify anything, but it is well that the world should understand the extent of his antagonism to all that it holds sacred.

It discloses a base view of the primary obligation on which society rests, when we find Mr Mill complacently, and without the shadow of a feeling of disgrace, say that he should have ardently aspired during many years to complete union at any practicable time with the incomparable lady whose friendship was the source both of happiness and improvement, but that both would have foregone that privilege rather than owe it to Mr Taylor's premature death. Mr Taylor must have been deeply indebted for this obliging consideration for his general convenience. If this is to be justified, society must hereafter rest upon the principle of facile divorce instead of indissoluble marriage. The latter institution is altogether out of harmony with the new code of morality, the philosophic "liberty" of man, the exploded "subjection" of women!

Another point in Mill's character which this celebrated friendship exhibits in a marked degree, is the total inability to appreciate character which distinguished him

through life. He was prone to exaggerate the mental capacities of those whom he liked. He was apt to credit those who excelled him in knowledge of practical life with intellect and abilities equal to his own. He describes himself in respect of natural gifts as rather below than above par. His men of genius were, most of them, commonplace people, who probably attracted him by a display of very secondary qualities, in which he, owing to his extraordinary education, was deficient. His parliamentary career showed his singular inability to judge men. If a man indulged in blasphemy more than ordinarily scurrilous, he was immediately mistaken for a philosopher more than ordinarily courageous. If a friend thoroughly understood the practical details of sewage, he was far more eligible than Mill himself to represent Westminster; but as Mill's constituency was supposed to be unalterable in its affections, the friend was sent with high testimonials to contest the seat of one of the leaders of his party, whose views, however, were not so advanced as his own. If a colonial governor was accused of losing his presence of mind in dealing with an armed insurrection of a whole island, Mill mistook him for a murderer, and called for his blood. In fact, Mill knew very little of human beings and practical life. He never had a chance of judging them for the first fourteen years of his life. The faculty of judging character is intuitive and divine. It must grow with our earliest growth. It is incapable of being acquired, like so much mathematics, by one whose habits and training isolate him from the world, and bury him either in a cloister or under a heap of metaphysics.

With regard to Mrs Taylor, with the eyes of a lover he saw in her



his own intellect and self reflected. Her admiring assent to his opinions, joined to her greater knowledge of persons and things as they really exist, enchanted him, and no doubt consciously influenced him. "Her practical turn of mind, and her almost unerring estimate of practical obstacles, repressed in me all tendencies that were really visionary. Her mind invested all ideas in a concrete shape, and formed to itself a conception of how they would actually work; and her knowledge of the existing feelings and conduct of mankind was so seldom at fault, that the weak point in any unworkable suggestion seldom escaped her." Yes; the link between their minds was, that she supplied to some extent the gap which his father's education had made in his mind. He never had the power of dealing with concrete shapes, or of appreciating them, or understanding them aright. Whether men or women or institutions presented themselves, he could play round them with his formidable apparatus of logic and analysis, and discover a host of abstract qualities which had little or nothing to do with the concrete shape before him; but he had lost (thanks to his extraordinary education), or never possessed, that intuitive faculty by which we penetrate motives and character, appreciate the circumstances by which we are surrounded, and accurately conceive in our minds the reality of the objects with which we have to deal.

So far as the public know, either from a published article of Mrs Mill's entitled "The Enfranchisement of Women," or from private accounts of her, there seems to have been nothing in her to justify the astounding estimate which Mill formed of her intellect and capacity. The article itself is clearly written, and is a faithful reflex of opinions

which Mill held all his life before he knew her, of which he distinctly claims the originality, and says that the strength with which he held them was the originating cause of the interest which she felt in him. There is not a spark of genius or poetry, or even a facility of apt illustration in it. It is just the sort of article which a woman of average abilities, in the constant habit of conversing with and believing in Mill, would easily write. It is entitled to the merit of clear and forcible exposition, and nothing more. But Mill, in speaking of Mr Carlyle, says: "I never presumed to judge him with any definiteness until he was interpreted to me by one greatly the superior of us both—who was more a poet than he, and more a thinker than I—whose own mind and nature included his, and *infinitely* more."

Up to the time of Mill's first introduction to her, it appears that "her rich and powerful nature had chiefly unfolded itself according to the received type of feminine genius. To her outer circle she was a beauty and a wit, with an air of natural distinction felt by all who approached her; to the inner, a woman of deep and strong feeling, of penetrating and intuitive intelligence, and of an eminently meditative and poetic nature." But after an intimate friendship sprang up, she is invested with every attribute of that ideal which a man of Mill's education and opinions would form and cherish. "In her, complete emancipation from every kind of superstition, and an earnest protest against many things which are still part of the established constitution of society, resulted not from the hard intellect, but from strength of noble and elevated feeling, and coexisted with a highly reverential nature." "In thought and intellect, Shelley, so far as his poems were de-

veloped in his short life, was but a child compared with what she ultimately became. Alike in the higher regions of speculation and in the smaller practical concerns of daily life, her mind was the same perfect instrument, piercing to the very heart and marrow of the matter, always seizing the essential idea or principle." Then he refers to her sensitive and mental faculties, her gifts of feeling and imagination, which fitted her to be "a consummate artist;" to her fiery and tender soul and vigorous eloquence, which fitted her for "a great orator;" to her knowledge, discernment, and sagacity, which fitted her to be "eminent among the rulers of mankind." Her moral character, the noblest and the best balanced ever met with; her unselfishness, her passion of justice, her boundless generosity, her genuine modesty combined with the loftiest pride, her scorn of whatever was mean and cowardly; and her burning indignation at everything brutal or tyrannical, faithless or dishonourable,—are all duly set forth in a sufficient number of flowing periods.

Mill says that his own strength lay wholly in the uncertain and slippery intermediate region which lies between that of ultimate aims and that of the immediately useful and practically attainable,—in other words, in the region of theory, of moral and political science. The priceless service which the lady rendered, or tried to render to him, was that she guarded him "against holding or announcing his conclusions with a degree of confidence which the nature of his speculations did not warrant." That is the vice of Mr Mill's speculative philosophy. It may have been limited and restrained by the circumstance to which he refers. But the degree of confidence permitted to him was measured by the boundless devo-

tion of an idolised friend or wife. He was and felt himself to be deficient in that practical knowledge which would have enabled him to impose his own restraints and repression upon his speculative excursions. And this is his description of the value of any suggestion which she might occasionally make: "When I came into close intellectual communion with a person of the most eminent faculties, whose genius, as it grew and unfolded itself in thought, continually struck out truths far in advance of me, but in which I could not detect any mixture of error, the greatest part of my mental growth consisted in the assimilation of those truths, and the most valuable part of my intellectual work was in building the bridges and clearing the paths which connected them with my general system of thought."

It is worthy of observation that the same extravagant eulogy (so much more creditable to Mill's affectionateness of disposition than to his soundness of judgment) is bestowed also upon the step-daughter, who, in editing this book, has plentifully substituted asterisks for these expressions of adoration. The similarity of the homage paid, while discussing talents and virtues which are probably far above the average, is very striking. "Though the inspirer of my best thoughts was no longer with me, I was not alone: she had left a daughter, my step-daughter, whose ever-growing and ripening talents from that day to this have been devoted to the same great purposes. Surely no one ever before was so fortunate as after such a loss as mine to draw another prize in the lottery of life. Whoever, either now or hereafter, may think of me and the work I have done, must never forget that it is the product not of one intellect and conscience, but of three."



It throws so much light on Mill's character and the dependence of his mind, that it is worth while to mention the extent to which he was, or believed himself to be, indebted to his wife for her assistance in his literary productions. He says that the first of his books in which Mrs Taylor's share was conspicuous was the 'Political Economy,' and that it was her influence which gave to the work that general tone by which it is distinguished from all previous treatises on the same subject. All its readers must have wondered at and admired the way in which a scientific treatise upon a dry subject is treated, filling it with general interest. Mr Mill explains that this is effected by "making the proper distinction between the laws of the Production of Wealth, which are real laws of nature, dependent on the properties of objects, and the modes of its distribution, which, subject to certain conditions, depend on human will." He says that the 'Political Economy' illustrates the general character of Mrs Taylor's contributions to his writings. "What was abstract and purely scientific was generally mine—the properly human element came from her." That this was so in the main we do not doubt; and if it were so to the extent he describes, the readers of Mr Mill's books, and especially of the 'Political Economy,' owe Mrs Taylor much; but the genius with which he was able to treat the "human element," and light up even the driest of scientific subjects, serves to make us regret the more keenly the education which had striven so sedulously to isolate him from human interests and sympathies.

If James Mill, instead of experimenting upon his son's intellect, had striven to realise that son's conception of education, as unfolded to the students of the University of

St Andrews, "the strengthening, exalting, and purifying of our common nature, and the fitting out of mankind with the necessary mental implements for the work they have to perform through life," we are convinced that he had raw material in all its forms to work upon with which any father might have been well content, however high his aspirations. If the son's ardent, affectionate, and imaginative nature—which even his education failed to crush—had been trained and cultivated; if the faculties of head, hand, and heart had been developed simultaneously, instead of the intellect being fostered alone—we might have been mourning now the loss of one of the greatest men of the century.

Again referring to those works which he attributes to "his almost infallible counsellor," he says that "The Liberty" is likely to survive longer than anything else I have written (with the possible exception of the 'Logic'), because the conjunction of her mind with mine (*i.e.*, in so many words, of two almost infallible minds) has rendered it a kind of philosophic text-book of a single truth." And in the 'Subjection of Women,' "All that is most striking and profound belongs to my wife, coming from the fund of thought which had been made common to us both, by our innumerable conversations and discussions on a topic which filled so large a place in our minds."

The particular form which this idolatrous worship of Mrs Taylor took is explicable only from the circumstance that, notwithstanding all philosophy, man is a being born to believe, to reverence and adore, as well as to think and feel; and the more the faculty of extra belief (*i.e.*, belief which does not rest on pure reason) is crushed out of a man's moral being, the more fatally it will

reappear in the conditions of daily life, or in superstitious observances. There would be neither scope, nor depth, nor progress in human life, if the intellect of human beings were for ever wrapped in the tightest swaddling-clothes which metaphysicians and analysts can prepare. The poetry of life is perpetually bursting out, and neither in the affairs of this world nor the next can the spirit of man be restricted from believing and hoping and imagining more than it can either see or know. Religion has been in all ages, races, and climates, a universal instinct of mankind. It is the master-passion of the human race; it has been the basis of laws, of government, of customs and institutions; it has torn and lacerated society in all its forms; it has been the curse and consolation of mankind. We may denounce its particular manifestations, but that the spirit of man cleaves to the world to come is as true as that he stands erect in this.

Religion was crushed out of Mr Mill from his cradle by an artificial process. Here is the form which its irrepressible spirit assumed in after-life. Writing after the death of his wife he says—"Her memory is to me a religion, and her approbation the standard by which, summing up as it does all worthiness, I endeavour to regulate my life." "Because I know that she would have wished it, I endeavour to make the best of what life I have left, and to work on for her purposes with such diminished strength as can be derived from thoughts of her and communion with her memory." And in other of his published works he says—"I venture to prophesy, that if mankind continue to improve, their spiritual history for ages to come will be the progressive working out of her thoughts, and realisation of her conceptions,"

"Were I but capable," he adds, "of interpreting to the world one-half of the great thoughts and noble feelings which are buried in her grave, I should be the medium of a greater benefit to it than is ever likely to arise from anything that I can write, unprompted and unassisted by her all but unrivalled wisdom."

We know the spirit in which Mill, from education and his whole system of thought, approached the subject of religious belief. All his self-love, his philosophy, and his manhood, were staked upon a firm superiority to prejudice, the presumed necessity of making analysis the test of truth, and of ruthlessly excluding from belief everything which does not stand that test. But of all the lessons contained in this biography, nothing stands out more prominently than this, the inadequacy of an analytic training and habit of mind to secure accuracy of judgment even in the most ordinary affairs of life. To adopt this system of dogmatic unbelief—the theory that because nothing more is demonstrable about God and the next world by process of ratiocination than about the conditions of life in another planet, therefore religion must be disowned, and the world be forbidden to hope or believe, to worship or revere—is to exclude from the domain of human consciousness all the tradition, the experience, and the aspirations of mankind. If the notions of progress propounded by this new school of philosophy are fairly estimated, it will be found that such progress advances in a circle, and that (having regard to the disruption of faith and all social and sexual relations) it would bring us back to a state of savage independence and dark despair, which it has taken ages to supersede by social subordination and conscious hope.



Every opinion and social institution which civilised life has found necessary, and which involve the duty of the individual to society, are attacked in the interests of the rights and liberty of man. The disintegrating force of such philosophy upon society resembles the dissolving influence which Mill himself describes so forcibly of the habit of analysis upon the mind. It is a dissolvent of society, of hope, faith, and virtue. Demonstrable or not by analysis or syllogisms, the doctrines, however learnt, or imparted to mankind, that man is made in the image of his Creator, is destined to immortality, and has within him a spiritual consciousness which is capable of contact with and subjection to the laws of a spiritual life at present only partially and obscurely disclosed to us, are doctrines which commend themselves to men of reasonable culture as well as to the untaught instincts of mankind, and which the intelligence as well as the devotion of human beings has, in the course of ages, sanctioned and believed. The love of metaphysics which is inborn in some of the nations of the world, cannot, having regard to the universal wants and instincts of human nature, supersede or successfully conflict with the sense of religion with which other races, and especially the Semitic, are instinct, and with which the whole world has been permeated as part of the essential elements of human life. Mill says of his father that the approach of death did not cause "the smallest wavering (as in so strong and firm a mind it was impossible that it should) in his convictions upon the subject of religion." That is not the way in which mankind at large can treat the subject. Mr Maurice himself is referred to by Mr Mill as a man whose mental powers and system of

thought fitted him to be a great philosopher, but who refused to stifle the religious craving, and recoiled from that intrepid infidelity which is held up for admiration. His acceptance of "a worthless heap of received opinions" is attributed to "timidity of conscience, combined with original sensitiveness of temperament." It led him, says Mr Mill, to believe that the Church of England had known everything from the first; that all the truths used to assail the Church and orthodoxy are really expressed in the Thirty-nine Articles. It has driven other gifted men, he adds, into Romanism—it has produced an enormous waste of intellectual power. And then, with almost querulous impatience, he exclaims, that there seems to be a need in many minds of a firmer support than they can find in the independent conclusions of their own judgments. The gradual efforts of countless ages of men, slowly feeling after more of the Divine Presence, and finding it, represent, in the words of an eloquent writer, far more faithfully than Mr Mill's over-confident conclusions, the onward march of human thought and experience.

The history, the conscience, and the experience of the human race, tell it that its relations to its Creator have a firm experimental basis on which to rest. No one, however refined or however untutored, can escape the inward control of conscience, or the external influence "of that power which makes for righteousness," which prescribes conduct, and gives or withholds personal happiness and inward peace. The sense of those relations is universal; it has been the very life of nations and individuals; it calls forth the whole power of the race, and alone of all the notions that have possessed mankind is capable of illuminating the

future or stimulating real progress. There is an innate force and power in it that will compel men to belief and reverence; and unless tradition and historic revelation are accepted, the inward craving which remains is hard to satisfy. Education, culture, and reasoning may purify and strengthen that sense; but if it is attempted to expel or deaden it, at the critical moments of personal or national life it is sure to reappear; or its innate power is shown by the enormous structure of mystical or supernatural belief which it will support. The spread of Mr Mill's sceptical atheism has been followed by a perfect "simoom of sacerdotal usurpation." The spirit of undue disbelief stimulates the spirit of credulity and emotional observances. The sentiment of religion is obviously inextinguishable; and those who attempt to discard it from our schools, or crush and baffle it in society, will find that their efforts hereafter as heretofore result in an access of superstition, a tightening of formularies, and the spread of sensuous services. These are the defences and outward coverings behind which the religious sentiment intrenches itself from the withering influence of the atheistical spirit. Religion is mysterious, but it is a fact; and its opponents find their overwhelming obstacles in human nature itself.

If all wisdom were the result of hard reasoning, only to be reached by the vigorous use of that wonderful analytic apparatus with which James Mill equipped his son, the world might then be ruled by philosophers. The use of this Autobiography is, that it shows not merely the dissolvent influence of such an equipment upon a man's moral and spiritual being, but also the enormous loss of power which it involves. Mill's training helped to make him a man of science, but it unfitted him for life, and rendered him a child in

the hands of men and women of far inferior talent, but with a little of that penetration and shrewdness which had been sacrificed in him. It excluded the instinctive knowledge of his fellows, and all sense of the providence of God. The gap which his philosophy makes in all that human nature requires to feed upon, resembles the rent which such training makes in a man's capacity. It demolishes the home, it desecrates religion, it destroys society. And as for intellect and learning, it contracts the intelligence and confines the sympathies. The sum of human knowledge and wisdom is derived from the growing experience of what the human spirit has felt and suffered and endured, as well as from the productions of human reason. The power which an inveterate habit of analysis gives is not to be despised, but it cannot displace the power of practical experience, of intuitive insight into character, of a well-balanced mind in a well-ordered body, of firm faith, and of the habitual strengthening of judgment and conscience by the light of the best which others have said and thought. The infant prodigy which came forth fully armed from his father's arsenal, contributed in his later years his share to the knowledge and advancement of mankind. But when we are asked to revere in him a new leader of thought, a man whose views are to be accepted as a new religion, we say that they are the product of a man who dealt with ideas, words, and images which he had no means of verifying, except at second hand; between whom and the world a great gulf was fixed; whose mind and life were out of harmony, from his earliest infancy, with any condition of life ever yet heard of or experienced. Sincerity is stamped upon every page of this Autobiography. The motive for



writing it is undeniably public-spirited. It conciliates more of kindly feeling and sympathy than its author in his lifetime ever inspired, except from a devoted band of almost fanatical worshippers, who probably imbibed from him the earliest ideas which they ever possessed, before the critical faculty had been duly formed within them by the light of increasing knowledge. But the book proves, beyond all doubt, that the life of the philosopher was an anomaly; that his intellectual, and even his moral being, was a thing of unnatural growth; and that though a master of logic and the possessor of powerful and highly trained reasoning faculties, he was bred and remained in such thorough isolation from the world and the society which he was intended to regenerate, that he was helplessly dependent upon others for a correct view of the facts of life. The audacity with which his startling theories were propounded, was equalled by the contempt with which he overlooked the most obvious and fatal objections. He demonstrated that in order to limit population, legal restrictions should be placed upon marriage; but he forgot the possibility of illegitimate children. The philosophy, as usual, went no further than the institution. And in his social theories, men and women are

angels or slaves, according as he is demonstrating their fitness for "liberty," or the effects of the slavery which he says they have so long endured. In other words, he too often made his facts square with his theory, instead of reversing the operation.

Such is the man whom free-thinkers and youthful Radicals delighted to honour as the regenerator of the world. He was neither in advance nor in the rear of his age, but simply never belonged to it. The few people and institutions which he knew, he clung to with superstitious veneration; the rest belonged to a world which he viewed through the haze of his own conceptions. His life had no playful childhood, no ripening manhood, and no experienced old age. At fourteen he was turned out of his father's workshop, finished and complete. The father had fulfilled the purpose which he had pursued with unrelenting rigour. The son lived on to accomplish the father's purposes in the world of science and abstract thought, and to demonstrate by his life and all the painful deficiencies of his character and capacities, that, although by forced development an athlete may be made in mental as well as muscular power, insulted nature will adjust the balance by the losses which it inflicts.

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NOTE RELATING TO THE STORY OF "THE MISSING BILLS — AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY," PUBLISHED IN OUR NUMBER FOR NOVEMBER 1873.

HAVING found ourselves quite unable to send a separate reply to every correspondent who has desired further information concerning this story, we subjoin, for the benefit of our readers generally, the substance of such replies as we would have desired to send. Our numerous correspondents on this subject may, we think, be separated into three divisions:—1. Those who are satisfied that there was nothing supernatural in the occurrences at all, and who rather reproach us for publishing the case without a protest against its being credible as narrated. 2. Those who would like to have more particulars concerning the apparitions; some, apparently in a sceptical spirit, desiring to institute a cross-examination of the witnesses, while others are manifestly anxious for minor details of a matter in which they feel deep interest. 3. Those who, entirely accepting the narrative as it stands, desire us to say whether such and such a point may not have been inadvertently omitted, as that point alone is wanting to bring the story into harmony with what happened to their grandmothers or other members of their families.

To the first class, who contend that if Mr Lathom had not dreamed a dream there would have been no pother about the matter, and who desire us to say honestly whether it isn't certain that the young man had a dream—perhaps remarkable, but still simply a dream,—we can only reply that Mr Lathom himself, who is certainly the best evidence on this point, would never for a moment allow that he had been deceived by a dream. He was often

enough asked, it seems, by those whom he allowed to question him on the subject, whether he could be certain that he was awake, and his replies were always distinctly in the affirmative. This, we know, will hardly satisfy some people, who would deny other people senses at all, when those senses presume to reveal anything which is at variance with certain crotchets. The objections are a complete justification of the silence which Mr Lathom and Mr Waddington agreed to maintain immediately after the events.

The second division appear to forget that there no longer exist means of probing the testimony, except so far as some of the questions now asked were anticipated in family conversations. We can't say how far Mr Lathom may have kicked the packet along the floor, or whether he may not have first encountered it at some distance from the spot where his visitant vanished. We don't know what he had for supper, or whether he supped at all. He certainly did not chew opium in his later days, and it is extremely unlikely that he ever did so: correspondents who speak of this "well known Eastern practice" should consider that the habits of Australia and of China are very dissimilar, although both countries are in the East. There is not the slightest ground for supposing that the bills so mysteriously discovered, after a certain number of months or days, turned to tinder or rags; and certainly Mr Lathom, as he grew old and rich, expressed not the slightest apprehension that he had received an uncanny loan, repayment of which was likely to be



exacted : on the contrary, he looked forward to the grave as the only bed where he could be at rest—the only place where he could lay down an intolerable burden of care. The belief of his relatives is, that he did not at all in his mind connect Probity Burdon with the spectre until months after its appearance. No reason can be given for the figure not looking towards Robert, nor for its bearing a lamp, which our correspondents are probably right in supposing that it might have dispensed with, it having, no doubt, other means of seeing its way. There was no attempt to seize the mysterious lady, no thought of clasping her tenderly in his arms, which caused her to vanish : we have not the least authority for saying that she would have remained and spoken if she had been more delicately dealt with, and if profane language had not been used. Mr Lathom was brought up sharply by his nose coming into contact with the wall, or something that stood against the wall, and too disconcerted to say exactly how things happened about that minute. The Jew cannot possibly be alive now, unless he writes *wandering* before his name. Whether he let fall his mantle on any one who could throw light on the strange story, our contributor does not know. It is not known who received the rent for the Jew's house after Lathom left it, which he did soon after he heard of Probity's death : it has long been pulled down, and a railway runs over the site.

Replying to inquirers of the third kind, we say, once for all, that no agent of ours has been grubbing in the muniment-room of any family, old or new. If the writer of any particular letter insinuating a charge of this kind could but see the letters of other writers, he would be convinced that there is oftentimes a

strong likeness between ghostly legends, and that it is quite possible to be able to tell one without pirating from his archives. The gentleman whose great-aunt followed a ghost into the woods, and came back with her shoes and dress smeared with red clay, which gave the first intimation of the whereabouts of one of the richest iron-mines in the country, has had no wrong done him. And we do not admit even resemblance to our story in the case where a gentleman was commanded by an apparition to marry a supposed poor girl, who turned out afterwards to be a great heiress. Dr Smollett is more likely to have invaded the secrets of this last family than ourselves, for he does distinctly make an apparition order Commodore Trunnion to "turn out and be spliced, or lie still and be — ;" on which occasion it was the spirit, and not the ghost-seer, that was a little forcible in the mode of expression. So far as we can ascertain, there was no peculiar odour in the apartment, no noise as of waving wings, and the ghost did *not* raise its arm with a warning gesture before disappearing. So far was Lathom from feeling horror or even a shudder, that he distinctly noted how much more calmly he bore the sight than he thought possible. In short, not one of the additional incidents suggested to us belongs to *our* story.

And here our notice might end, were it not that from among the stories sent us as resembling ours, we have been so much struck with three, that we think our readers also might like to know the outlines of them.

The first occurred about twenty years since to an officer of the army, who is still alive. He had arrived at a station on the South American continent, and taken possession of a one-storied house, his official resi-

dence. Soon he found it to be a subject partly of perplexity and partly of jesting at the mess, that the last occupant (indeed we believe several former occupants) of the house had been troubled by the visits of an apparition, supposed to be a young lady who died there many years before. Of course he was congratulated on the pleasure that was in store for him; but the prospect did not alarm him much; and as time wore on, and he remained unmolested, he was very indifferent about the matter, and had a cheerful answer to make always to them who bantered him about the ghost. So far, good; but his tribulation was coming. He retired to rest one night in the rainy season, as serene as ever, and sank off to sleep as a young fellow with a clear conscience would do. But a tropical rain descending on the shingles of his roof rudely disturbed his slumber. He woke up, heard the rain, wished it at—well, perhaps at Jericho, if there happened to be a

drought in the Holy Land at that time—and turned over with the resolve of going to sleep again in spite of the deluge and its din. But as he formed this resolution, he was aware of a gentle light in the chamber, and, looking forth from his bed, he saw, much as Mr Lathom did, a female figure, shrouded and bearing a lamp, passing across the room. For a second or two he lay astonished; then, as the legend of the house occurred to him, he sprang from the bed, exclaiming “—’s ghost by —.” The figure eluded him, and the light disappeared. He felt his way back to bed and calmly slept again; at which he was much surprised, as he never thought himself able to bear such a sight without being strongly affected by it. The thing told upon him afterwards, though, and he had to get leave of absence and make a short excursion to get rid of the effects.

The second narrative we give, entire as it reached us:—

#### TO THE EDITOR OF ‘BLACKWOOD’S MAGAZINE.’

THURLESTONE RECTORY, KINGSBRIDGE,  
DEVONSHIRE, 14th November 1873.

DEAR SIR,—A friend of mine has just sent me this month’s number of your Magazine,—and yesterday I read in it an interesting little story called “The Missing Bills—an Unsolved Mystery.” Had it not been prefaced by an assurance of its truth, and a hint that what sometimes seems supernatural may not be so, I should have passed it over as a pleasing fiction; but while awake during the dark hours of this morning, recalling it to my mind, its circumstances seemed rather to bring the story within the bounds of solution—at all events, of possibility—extraordinary as they were. An honest and industrious young man, the son of a surgeon, who in former days had conferred a great obligation on a Jew, had the loan of that Jew’s house for a period, accompanied with a promise

that he would certainly repay the obligation he had received—in *some* way. The young man, in course of business, became involved in great difficulties, and applied to a friend in Australia, whose daughter he was probably to marry, for some money, which, if it arrived in time, would save him from bankruptcy. The money, in bills, was sent at once; but, for safety’s sake, these bills were made out in triplicate, and each packet was directed in rather a singular manner, but all exactly the same. The bearer of the first packet, named Karl Müller, was wrecked, and supposed to have been lost; yet, strange to say, the packet of which he was the bearer found its way in a mysterious manner to the floor of the bedroom in which the young man slept in the Jew’s house, just in time to rescue



him from his pecuniary difficulties. The young man that same night believed, or dreamed, that he saw an apparition; that he jumped out of bed, and struck his foot against a packet on the floor. The idea was so vivid that he could scarcely believe it was a dream; and to his surprise, on getting out of bed in the morning, he saw the packet on the floor. Now, from what is said in the end of the story, it appears that this Karl Müller was an acquaintance of the Jew, and that a man of that very name had died in that same town to which the Jew had gone (Frankfort, I think the name was, but your Magazine has left this house now); that he had lived there many years, and had begun to reside there at the same time as a boat with three men saved from a wreck had come in somewhere on the coast of Brittany, one of whom he was supposed to have been. Now the Jew was quite aware of his young friend's difficulties, and, a few days before, had written to assure him that he was greatly interested in his circumstances, and solemnly promising him that all should come right. Is it impossible that Karl Müller, supposed to have been lost, may, for reasons of his own, have given sanction to that supposition, and have gone to his friend at Frankfort; but feeling that ruin might be the consequence to an innocent person—a friend, too, of the Jew's—if the packet he was intrusted with missed its destination at the time it should have reached it, is it not probable that he consulted his friend as to what was best to be done; and that the Jew, perhaps knowing something about his own house that others did not, and perhaps having an able confederate (I think there was something said about a clockmaker who repaired a clock in that room the day before), contrived that the packet should be made to reach the floor in the middle of the night? I think I could contrive such a thing myself. We know what conjurers do with horse-hair;—and if any movement of bedclothes detached a packet from the top of the clock, the noise of its fall might in a dream be connected with a great many extraordinary ideas. As for the bearer of the second packet believing that the mys-

teriously found one was the very one he was intrusted with, owing to the number marked on it, there is no great difficulty in supposing he was simply mistaken; and his mistake was not of such a character as to have attracted his attention, but that he really believed his packet *was* marked with the number it *should have been* marked with. I should like much to know if the writer of the story agrees with me. However, I don't know that I should have written this to you, were it not for the circumstance of the knowledge I possess, and for the truth of which I can vouch, of another story perhaps as extraordinary—an episode in the life of my father, and which I have often heard my mother relate—though, to be sure, I cannot sprinkle it judiciously with a ghost and a love story; and yet it is not absolutely without a little touch of the latter. I have already scribbled so much, that I believe I must take it for granted you will not publish it; yet an old friend of mine told me the other day, when we were conversing on the subject of Providence, that I ought not to keep such a tale unknown. I will therefore jot it down. In the year 1807, my father (Captain Courtenay Ilbert of the Artillery) was ordered to take troops to Quebec; and in those days the Government was not very particular sometimes with regard to the seaworthiness—so I have been led to believe—and proper provisioning of troop-ships. My father was a young married man then, and had his wife, with an infant, on board, so that the voyage was a matter of anxiety. Just as they neared the Gulf of Newfoundland, a passing ship hailed the Thames transport, in which my father was; and the captain of the ship, in the few words that passed about their position, said that “of course they had with them a chart of the Gulf of St Lawrence?” On the captain of the Thames replying that he had not, the observation of the other captain was, “Then if you get safe to Quebec your lives are given to you!” The Thames soon got into difficulties, owing to the fogs, and more than once narrowly escaped being wrecked. Provisions were falling very short also. One day they observed, at a little distance from them, a dark ob-

ject, which, on nearing, they perceived to be an abandoned vessel. My father and his subaltern (the late Major-Gen. Hardinge), and a sergeant, took the boat to examine her, and went on board. They found that she had been scuttled; but going out of the cabin, one of the party kicked the door of a sort of cupboard more open than it was, and saw some litter. There were three things—an old wig, an old Bible, and a chart of the Gulf of St Lawrence. This was not supernatural, but it was what we will term providential. This soon set the Thames right in its bearings. However, as the provisions were short, as, soon after, they were passing an island, my father and others thought they might as well take the boat and rectify their commissariat a little, if they could. The island was called Percy, in Gaspé Bay, and they found its population was merely a few Irish people, the chief of whom was named Phelim O'Flinn. They were living in rather a primitive manner; but on my father's asking Phelim O'Flinn if he could possibly render them any assistance regarding food, he immediately collected all he could, chiefly bread and such things as would be acceptable. When my father asked him what he should pay him for them, his answer was, that "he was not the man to take advantage of his fellow-creatures in distress;" and refused to accept any money at all. When he heard, however, that my father was going to be stationed at Quebec, he said it was just possible he might have to go there some day, and if it should so happen that my father was still at Quebec, he would make so bold as to come and see him. Many months after this, one dark night after a heavy fall of snow, it was my father's turn, as captain of the guard, to go round the fortifications of Quebec with a sergeant and twenty men,—the sergeant, with a lantern, marching first, my father rather behind the others. He kicked something with his foot, and as the ground was even with snow he was surprised, and desired the sergeant to step back with the lantern. It was a large pocket-book, and in it he perceived there were many dollar-notes, and to a large amount—more than a hundred pounds' worth, I believe. Looking for the name of the owner, he

read inside the cover the words, "Phelim O'Flinn, Percy, Gaspé Bay, Gulf of St Lawrence." Of course my father, the next morning, made every inquiry he could for any one of that name, but for a great part of the day unsuccessfully; but in the latter part of it, in his search in the lower part of the city—Lower Town, as I believe it was called—looking in at a large sort of cellar, there he saw Phelim O'Flinn sitting on a cask—the picture of misery and despondency. He went up to him, and asked him how he could possibly come to Quebec and not come and see him, as he had promised. "Ah, sir!" said the poor man, "I am heartbroken. Yesterday I arrived at Quebec from home—for I had come up to get the things required for my daughter's marriage—her furniture and other things; and I had brought up all the money we had saved. I met some fellow-countrymen, who were very kind to me, and very hospitable. We were very merry last evening, and we thought we would take a walk round the garrison. In the walk I lost my pocket-book that contained all my money, and now I must go back, and my poor girl must remain unmarried." My father then produced the pocket-book, telling him he had found it. Phelim O'Flinn dropped on *his knees*, and *thanked God*. I believe I have told you the story in the very words used, or almost exactly the words—remembering so well the words in which I have so often heard my mother relate them: and I well remember, when I was a boy, the old sergeant's wife showing me the Bible that was found in the deserted vessel, with the chart of the Gulf of St Lawrence. This story, then, may certainly be placed in the class termed providential; and I believe apparent interpositions of divine providence are often happening in the world, especially to such as poor Phelim O'Flinn, whose first ejaculation was to *thank God*. Not that I think that the persons to whom they happen have any very great reason to congratulate themselves on account of them. They may be intended to strengthen the faith of those whom God sees to be rather inclined to weakness; not for such as those whose lot will be the most glorious in a future state. For instance, the three who, in



the face of the fiery furnace, could say: "Our God whom we serve *is able* to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. *But if not*, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not

serve thy gods ;"—and for a reward and testimony to their faith and trust so strong, and for the benefit of others who had it not, God did then and there interpose.—Yours faithfully,  
PEREGRINE A. ILBERT.

The third story (without the writer's address, though he asks for an answer) has the Limerick post-mark ; and although it has something in common with "The Missing Bills," as exhibiting a spirit moving matter, yet there is not sufficient similarity to suggest to any candid mind that the one tale can be derived from the other. It appears that our correspondent's great-grandmother, being at the time in delicate health, in which state she continued for a month or two afterwards, woke up one night out of a troubled sleep, with an intense longing for a drink of butter-milk. This desire had not long oppressed her, when she saw a girl named Biddy—(surname illegible)—enter the chamber bearing a pitcher which the invalid lady felt assured contained the coveted butter-milk. So vehement was her craving that she never thought for a moment of the singular way in which it was to be gratified ; for it was past midnight, the house was locked and barred, and she might have remembered that the girl who came in was supposed to be in the country, seven or eight miles off. She heeded not the strangeness of these things, but aroused her husband, desiring him to rise and fetch her the drink from Biddy's pitcher. No sooner, however, had she given this order than she revoked it, and with frantic haste (she was a woman of very refined feeling) pulled the bed-clothes over her spouse's eyes. The cause of this sudden action was, that the girl was making some singular motions, and seemed inclined to throw a somersault. She did not exactly do this, but she did what

was quite as peculiar. She stood on her head ; and now the meaning of this position became apparent. It was intended to show that the being on whom the lady in the bed looked was not material, nor clad in material drapery, *for the natural consequence of inverting her position did not ensue*. After remaining inverted long enough to convince the beholder that this could not be Biddy So-and-so in the flesh, the apparition vanished ; and now the lady, still intent on the butter-milk, permitted her husband to get up, strike a light (for it had become dark again), and examine the room. There he found, sure enough, a pitcher full of the most beautiful butter-milk, with which he soon relieved his wife's intolerable craving. After this they both enjoyed a tranquil night. In the morning they inquired after Biddy, and were shocked to hear that she had been hysterical for some days, and that last night she was for several hours in a trance, during which she carried (as she declared) butter-milk to the lady who saw the apparition. This was not all. The grandfather of the writer was born not long after, and he was curiously marked with a pitcher ; so that when he stood on his head, as he used to do when a little bit of a thing, the mark could be distinctly seen. His descendants (including, of course, our correspondent) have all the same mark.

We now leave the subject, only regretting our inability to explain particulars, which, if they could be made clear, would take the story of "The Missing Bills" out of the list of Unsolved Mysteries.

## A PIECE OF HEATHER.

BERNE, Aug. 1873.

DEAR KATE,—In Mr Murray's Guide,  
With neat red riband tied together,  
Between two leaves I've put aside  
Your tiny sprig of Scottish Heather.

It came to me at Berne, you know ;  
I had it in a quiet corner  
Of the old terrace, as the glow  
Of sunset lit the Wetterhörner.

While lower Earth outwearied slept,  
From fiery Day yet parched and torrid,  
O'er the snow-pillowed giants crept  
A lazy flush from foot to forehead ;

Till the grim peaks, which, cold and lone,  
Had faced the sun as if to flout it,  
Now like a row of beacons shone,  
All rose against the greys about it.

They kindled up from horn to horn,  
And a quaint notion Fancy lent me ;  
Methought they crimsoned as in scorn  
Of the poor upstart you had sent me.

"The land our mighty presence fills  
Dame Nature's grandest mood discloses ;  
What make you, from your baby hills,  
'Mid Edelweiss and Alpine Roses ?

"When men have travelled, you forget,  
The hills they've climbed, the lakes they've rowed on,  
Leave little room for them to set  
Much store by Lomond or by Snowdon !

"What next ?"—it was the biggest spoke ;  
A mighty avalanche shook his quarters ;  
He cracked his glaciers at the joke,  
And shouted in a roar of waters.

I hung my head, and, half in shame,  
I looked upon your tiny token ;  
When out of it an answer came,  
As clearly as the first had spoken.

The little flow'ret seemed to wear  
Upon its leaf a look defiant,  
And to throw back with interest there  
His scorn upon the scornful giant.



"You overgrown, unsightly mass,  
(Rude challenge breeds uncivil answer),  
Learn, in your innermost crevass,  
It isn't size that makes the man, sir !

"I come from lands of fern and heath,  
Which smell so sweet, and look so tender,  
When the long kiss of Autumn's breath  
Has fanned them to a blush of splendour,

"That every puny, half-starved flower  
Which aches upon your iron bosom,  
Would give that honour for an hour  
Upon those laughing slopes to blossom,

"Or nestle in their grasses rare,  
Like jewels in a woman's tresses ;  
While you were born as bald, you were,  
As any head that Truefitt dresses !

"If salt is good, then how thrive you,  
Aloft there in your frigid snow-zone,  
Where the best wind that ever blew  
Bears not a breath of Ocean's ozone ?

"I bring you from the farther North  
A sauce your meal of ice to savour ;  
A single whiff of Clyde and Forth  
Gives all your air a finer flavour !

"Be more polite another day :"—  
The mountains held their tongues and whitened ;  
But for my life I couldn't say  
If they were most amused or frightened.

On the bold messenger I smiled—  
"True offspring of the British nation,  
As for the *sauce* you bring, my child,  
You've quite enough for all creation.

"There be some folks whom fighting charms,  
Some noisy, and some quiet races ;  
We'll talk against the world in arms,  
At any given times and places.

"'Tis rarely that the sage, I wis,  
With any party on his oath sides,  
But holds, as I do now, there is  
A good deal to be said on both sides.

"Whiche'er the better cause has shown,  
Old Scotland or the land of Tell,—come,  
You've one advantage all your own—  
Kate sent you, and you're very welcome !"

H. C. MERIVALE.

## THE INDIAN MUTINY : SIR HOPE GRANT.

TIME glides on with a motion so silent and often imperceptible, that it is difficult to believe that not much short of twenty years have elapsed since England was struck by one of the most startling, unexpected, and painful blows that have happened to her in the whole course of her history—the strangely-sudden, brief, and terrible episode of the Mutiny in India. There are few things that bring home to us more distinctly the passage of life than the effort of recollecting how long it is since a great historical event occurred. It seems yesterday—and we who look back upon it now were, many of us, as mature and full-grown to our own consciousness as we are to-day ; yet it is seventeen years ago. Strange thought, which makes the middle-aged observer draw his breath more quickly, and betrays to him how the table-land of life begins to verge towards the declining slope. Of all the great public crises which have passed over the country within the memory of the present generation, this event of the Mutiny is the most striking and terrible. The political changes which we have undergone have been indeed of a most weighty and fundamental character, and may affect us and our children far more deeply than anything happening beyond the boundary of the four seas can do ; but politics do not affect the personal happiness, the imagination, and the emotions of a country, as did the great revolt which for a moment menaced our national pride and supremacy, and cut deep into the

national heart. All the passions that can inflame a people, rage—righteous, but sometimes almost wild in its natural vehemence—shame, horror, indignation, grief, tragic and primitive influences which sway humanity at their will, but which, in our age of civilisation and modified emotions, so seldom have full scope—burst like a flood into the heart of the race, which became as the heart of one man, in that sudden return, so to speak, to savagery, that sudden uprisal of the Pagan, supposed slain or conquered, against the Civilised ; we do not say the Heathen against the Christian, for Christianity, we fear, has but little to do on either side in such a conflict of race against race, conqueror against conquered. If it should so happen—and there are some signs in the air which, for the moment at least, look alarmingly like it—that England has begun to enter upon the cycle of decadence,—decadence at least from that primary place in the world's regard which she once held,—the historian of the future will trace in the Indian Mutiny the first blow that assailed her in mid career, and made defeat and downfall possible words in her vocabulary. The costly Crimean war, with its unsatisfactory conclusion, had given to the country a wondering consciousness that all our arrangements were not so perfect as we thought ; but still as everything did finally end in success, and as there were, as always, prodigies of individual valour upon which we could plume ourselves, and an ally

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Incidents in the Sepoy War of 1857-58. Compiled from the Private Journals of General Sir Hope Grant, G.C.B. ; together with some Explanatory Chapters by Captain Henry Knollys, R.A., Author of 'From Sedan to Saarbruck.' William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1873.



on whose shoulders we could lay the blame, whatever uneasiness there might be in the national mind was dissipated. No prevision of harm had ever dawned upon England. It was true that a few old croakers, people whose only claim to attention was the fact that they knew what they were talking about, were heard by times in corners, harmless Cassandras to whom nobody paid any attention; but neither doubt nor caution were in the general thoughts. Then all at once, before we could draw breath, the storm out of a clear sky burst upon us. The country staggered like a ship at sea when the first blast of a sudden storm strikes its careless sails. Then there came an awful pause, of incredulity, of refusal to believe, of vain hopes that the news might be false or exaggerated; then followed those details which drove the nation mad. There is no other word for it. Does not the reader feel even now the fierce throb in his throat, the wild rage, horror, sleepless thirst and longing for vengeance that took possession of him, were he the peacefullest man that ever trod English soil? Yes, vengeance!—had not time and space interfered, England, mad, would have rushed bodily into that land of blood to take her revenge for her outraged women, her tortured captives. When soldiers die with arms in their hands, their very dearest and nearest consent, with pride in their mourning; but the horrors of savage warfare, the torments, the insults, the shame, and cruel anguish which make a servile insurrection always doubly terrible, had ceased to be known to England for centuries. We no longer believed in such things; we were full of theories that anything like them had ceased to be possible. We had gone to sleep tranquilly upon our volcano—we had put confidingly in the very

jaws of the wolf many innocent and helpless heads, beings that could but endure and could not resist; and the awakening from our security was terrible. For a moment not only the life and happiness of every British resident in India, but the British supremacy in India and prestige throughout the world, seemed on the edge of certain destruction. Our neighbours standing round with that suppressed delight in our misfortunes which neighbours are not unapt to show, especially to one who has been somewhat arrogant in his prosperity, waited for the tidings of our ruin—and we ourselves were not sure that we did not expect by each new mail to receive the same dreaded tidings. Disaster came after disaster, misery after misery. Never, we think, in any time of war has the popular heart beat so entirely as one; and with good reason—for the few Englishmen who were standing at bay, scattered one here and one there over the vast continent, stood not only for England against all the powers of darkness, but for justice and peace against red rapine and war—for modern civilisation, with its code of mercy, forbearance, and law, against the diabolical carnage and outrage of the savage world. And our savage enemy was not a rude savage like any African man of the woods, but the crafty and cultivated savage of a civilisation older than our own, trained to a more exquisite knowledge of possible barbarities, and to some devilish refined perception of how he could most deeply wound.

Time has smoothed away, at least to all not immediately involved, the effect of this tremendous blow. If India does not yet fulfil the poet's augury, and wear "her jewelled turban with a smile of peace," as grateful for our benefits, she is at least subdued and orderly, allowing no articulate sound of rebellion,

and still less any overt act, to escape from her mysterious masses. Her constitution has been changed, and everything is different. For her the Mutiny has been as a convulsive new birth, altering the whole tenor of her public life; for England, it still remains the most extraordinary, tragical, and terrible incident of the century, the strangest interruption of her career that has ever befallen her. Such a story cannot be told without exciting reminiscences warmer and stronger than are most of our actual experiences in life. The recollections of the Crimean war, the only other struggle in which our country has been actually engaged during the knowledge of most living men, pales to nothing before the burning memory of those horrors in India which revealed to us all at once the depths of blackness and of nobleness still surviving in that human nature, which we began to believe had been fundamentally altered by the fact that the world had reached its nineteenth Christian century. Yet the time which has elapsed is long enough to have made it possible for the reader to go over again with some calmness that terrible ground—to understand how an event so appalling came about, and to consider as history what he once regarded with irrestrainable passion as immediate event. Everything that tends to encourage a clearer view of the great country which Providence has given us the guidance of, to make us more distinctly aware of the nature of the work, and its risks, and such rewards as are possible, is an advantage to England, and especially to the new race growing up to govern and labour in India. Sir Hope Grant's modest and soldierly narrative, which neither dwells upon the horrors past, nor exaggerates the tremendous struggle, but tells the

story of daily conflict with the gravity and simplicity which so specially belong and do honour to his profession, will be received with satisfaction both by those to whom the Indian Mutiny is one of the most vivid and terrible recollections of their lives, and by those to whom it is simple history, a landmark of the past.

Such a book as this shows better, perhaps, than any description can do, the advantages of the practical worker in any eventful period of history. The soldier's line of thought is entirely apart from any consideration of the causes which bring about wars, mutinies, or rebellions. The great questions which lie at the root of the struggle, the principles involved, are happily removed by their preliminary character altogether out of his field of observation. With these the statesman, the philosopher, the legislator have to do. The soldier's task is more simple and straightforward. He is not called upon to conciliate opposing principles, but to overcome external difficulties,—to guide one body of men, to subdue and overcome another; and the practical aim thus given to all his thoughts acts upon his mind, and shapes a quite special type of character, than which there is nothing more attractive or delightful. We are very apt to ignore the mental qualities which are necessary to make a good soldier, even in a subordinate position; the quickness of eye and promptitude of mind, the daring and the wariness, the power of calculation yet capability of setting all calculations at defiance, which a man must possess to whom any responsibility is given in a moment of danger; and to consider the very ordinary gift of personal courage which many fools possess, and some wise men lack, as worth more to a fighting man than the brains which are liable to be blown



out at any moment. No one, however, is unaware of the great mental as well as bodily strain to which every commander in the field must be subjected, or can be unconscious of the fact that a great General requires genius to inspire him as much as a great Poet. The peculiarity in the soldier's case, however, is that his genius, though involving all the higher exercises of mental power, imagination as well as calculation, is so modified and shaped by the practical uses to which it is bent, that he himself in most cases is infinitely less conscious of his high intellectual standing than are his equals in other lofty pursuits. It would seem to be the tendency of abstract thought to magnify the importance of the mind beyond all other human things—a weakness which leads to innumerable aberrations, and often marks with mortal imperfection those powers of reason, only too clear and too far-reaching, which, despising all conditions except intellectual ones, go astray, without being aware of it, from all the possibilities of life. The soldier's experience is exactly the reverse. Practical difficulties are the first thing he has to consider; he is bound to fact, even when called upon to exercise a high faculty of imagination, and to throw himself mentally into his adversary's position, in order to divine what that adversary is likely to do. This continual practical aim and strong hold of reality over the mind and thoughts, saves him from all the ordinary drawbacks of intellectualism, and gives him a simplicity, unconsciousness, and humility of mind, which are as important morally as they are refreshing and delightful. We do not know a more attractive picture than that of the honest and simple soldier, scarcely aware of the intellectual power which he must possess in

order to be what he is, taking credit for nothing but a desire to do his duty, expecting neither glory nor the name of hero, but only the approbation of his brothers in arms, and the reputation of "a good officer"—and standing faithful at once to God and his country without ever thinking that he has any power of election in the matter, or any possible alternative. There are circumstances in which this calm matter-of-course becomes absolutely sublime. This is the special charm which the reader will find in Sir Hope Grant's simple book, as in so many other unaffected records of military toil. The soldier-historian may pause now and then to note the valour of a brother officer, or the daring of some adventurous party; but he treats his own doings as if they were mere brick-making, and goes on steadily, not to say stolidly, through his record of each day's labour, as if it were the most ordinary occupation in the world. When he has the chance of a frolic, he goes into it with the light-heartedness of a schoolboy; then turns his horse's head to face death and desperation, with the coolness of a workman returning to everyday work. He is indeed so little effective, at the first glance, in a pictorial point of view, that the spectator has to look again, and by the help of other lights than those which his hero offers, before he can form any idea of the real greatness of the man with whom he has to do.

The causes of the Indian Mutiny will never, we suppose, be fully known, at least to any European;—why the many different and often conflicting races should have been moved all at once, with one impulse, to this desperate and foolish attempt to throw over the sovereignty of the stranger; why they should have chosen that moment, and

why, having made their first step so successfully, they should have fallen into such feebleness afterwards, are questions which we do not attempt to answer. It is, of course, always sufficiently comprehensible that the natives of a great country should from time to time be moved with intolerable impatience at thought of their conquered condition, especially when they have education enough to calculate on their own surpassing power of numbers, and on the comparative weakness of the stranger in the midst of them. According to all human probability, this feeling will and must continue to exist, and it is one for which every conquering race must be prepared; but this permanent danger is not enough of itself to account for so sudden and so violent an outburst of national passion. No better lesson could be given of the facility with which the popular mind receives an impression, and the impossibility of dissipating such an impression when once formed, than by the story of the "greased cartridges," which the mysterious leaders of the Hindoo race took advantage of as the occasion necessary to rouse their followers. We scarcely need to recall the facts to the reader. The introduction of the Enfield rifle was the simple cause of the first convulsion: the cartridges for this rifle were greased with some preparation actually containing tallow, and supposed also to contain lard, the fat of the cow and the hog, both of which implied pollution and loss of caste to the native soldier. Captain Knollys, who has carefully edited and furnished some important and valuable chapters introductory and commentary to Sir Hope Grant's narrative, enters in detail into this question, and to all appearance proves that those cartridges were never really

used, nor meant to be used, by the Sepoys. Several boxes of greased ammunition were indeed, he informs us, sent to India and served out to a few companies of Sepoys, but only for the purpose of "subjecting it to the tests of climate." "It was carried in the pouch, handed on from man to man, and finally sent back to England. Not a round was used by the Sepoys for practice purposes." Not only was this the case, but the ferment roused by this imaginary attempt upon their caste, was met by an immediate change of exercise, and permission to lubricate their own cartridges in their own way, so as to forestall the very shadow of reasonable objection. Reasonable objections, however, were not at all the real danger; and all the precautions which were used to prevent or remove the insane panic which had taken possession of the popular mind were in vain. Many other rumours of visionary terror were circulated among them to bring this unreasonable panic to a head. They were warned that their conquerors were about to make a grand attempt to pollute and degrade the oriental races to their own level. They were told that the Company's officers had sprinkled the blood of cows and pigs over the public stores of salt, with this diabolical purpose; that they had mixed animal fat with the ghee used by the Hindoos; that they had adulterated flour with ground bones, and polluted the very wells by throwing meat into them. These curious follies of the imagination remind us of nothing so much as of Manzoni's story of the fables current among the Milanese at the time of their great plague—fables much of the same description, and producing the same madness of panic and revenge. Captain Knollys deprecates the idea of "judging natives by the same standard as we judge Euro-



peans;" but we are by no means sure that Europeans of the same class, assailed, or supposing themselves to be assailed, in their prejudices and beliefs, would not, even now, be capable of taking up an equally false impression, and clinging to it with equal vehemence—especially if behind them were secret leaders, ready to work upon their imagination in all kinds of wily ways—and at the bottom a prevailing sense of wrong, such as can scarcely be expected to be absent from the mind of the conquered. That a mass of mistaken impressions, something of this character, and invulnerable to all attempts at explanation, and even to the plainest teaching of facts, lies at the root of the persistent enmity in the breast of the uneducated Irish towards Great Britain, who can doubt?

On this tremendous foundation every kind of wild hope was built—hope of casting off altogether the yoke of the stranger, hope of setting up decayed dynasties, of changing obscure pensioners into powerful princes, of clutching at all the prizes which revolution is supposed to fling about; and, individually, of lawless freedom, revenge upon superiors, plunder and rapine, and that saturnalia of blood and crime in which all Eastern nations have from time to time indulged. The crisis was helped on by the extraordinary calm and security of the English, and especially of English officers, who, according to Captain Knollys, had ceased to keep up the personal intercourse which is so necessary to the maintenance of loyalty in all primitive races; and who, we fear, made little effort to conceal their contempt for the people who surrounded them like wild beasts thirsting for blood, and whom it was the will of the conqueror to treat as gentle and domesticated

animals. This accounts for the total absence of precautions until too late, which betrayed so many little groups of English into the hands of their murderers, and made possible those scenes which even now we dare not think of, into the details of which no man ventures to enter, and which we conceal dumbly even from ourselves under the memorial cross which casts a shadow of the universal peace of death on the remains of the outraged and tortured.

Sir Hope Grant's diary begins in May 1857, very shortly before the march upon Delhi, which ended—though much too slowly for the excited watchers at home, whose fury of indignation was beyond all words to express—in the fall of that stronghold of rebellion, and with it of all the insurgents' chances of eventual success. The direction in which the gallant writer's steps were thus turned spares us from the dismalest tale of all, the horrible catastrophe of Cawnpore, in which every detail of tragic shame and misery centres. It seems hard even now for any one who lived through these times to think of peaceful business or ordinary existence as carried on at a place, the name of which is associated with events so terrible. It is quiet enough now; and no doubt English children play, and English women smile, within those walls, which we cannot think of but with a shudder, and which no one in this island could name for years without a surging upwards of indignant blood, and that hot moisture to the eyes which scorches the eyelids, and is something as different as can be from mere tears. How familiar those names grew to us in that fiery moment! Never blazing Indian sun burnt in a landscape upon the fevered brain as that cruel illumination fixed upon our minds the white town with its demons let

loose; the great river, alien, yet less cruel, which here and there gave deliverance and cool death to a hunted soul. Let us turn from the scene which still is too rife of memories. Delhi had its tragedy, too, terrible enough, but which scarcely seized upon the mind as did the catastrophe of Cawnpore. There, however, were the headquarters—so far as it was possible to identify any headquarters in such a tumultuous insurrection—of the Mutiny; and thither, accordingly, the main body of the little European army marched. We do not know whether England is exceptionally impatient when war is going on, or if it was the excitement of the extraordinary and terrible circumstances alone which made the country here so wild for instant action, and the apparent progress of the generals there so tedious and slow. But we remember well the furious impatience (no softer word can express the popular feeling) and wild outcry of disappointment which rose everywhere as each mail came in, and the spectators at home learned that the fighters abroad had not yet made any impression on Delhi, or quelled and crushed and stamped out the Mutiny which it was intolerable to us should last a day. It would be hard to say what miracle of valour, what entire obliteration of professional rules in one hot onslaught, what instant reverse of evil fortune by one prodigious assault of arms, the country expected; but something miraculous, sudden, overwhelming in rapidity like the bursting forth of the unexpected flame itself, we certainly did expect. And we were liberal of blame, as the ignorant always are, and between rage and tears owned to ourselves that the day of great generals was over. This was before modest Havelock had come out of his obscurity, and before the man

whom all England began suddenly of one impulse to babble of as Sir Colin, demonstrated to us that our hasty lamentation was wrong. The temporary injustice which must thus perhaps always spring from the excited spectatorship of a great nation, entirely prevented from taking any share in the work, and requiring an ideal rapidity and success from its emissaries, must, we suppose, enter into the soldier's calculations in all circumstances. In these extraordinary circumstances he had, as a matter of course, still more to bear.

There was, however, an excuse for some confusion and bewilderment of counsel among the unfortunate generals suddenly roused from the routine duties of Indian garrison work in the worst and most dangerous season, to quell with a handful of men a great rebellion, and to subdue a thickly populated continent, full of hostile races all eager to profit by our destruction, if not to aid in destroying us. The first commander-in-chief, General Anson, died, apparently of the responsibility alone, almost before he had entered on his duties, in the beginning of May in this eventful year. His successor, Sir Henry Barnard, held his appointment for less than two months,—only long enough to lead his forces to Delhi, and to see the first beginning of the obstinate conflict around that city. During this brief but tremendous interval, everything that was most likely to overwhelm the mind was united to the utmost strain of bodily power—long marches under a hot sun, perpetual anxiety, and those cares of a responsible ruler which are so appalling to minds unfitted for them. A good ordinary soldier suddenly thrust into such a command, without either genius or strength of mind to support him, was, indeed,



in about as alarming and painful a position as it is possible to conceive ; and after some strange wanderings of mind, orders and counter-orders, determinations to attack, and falterings of resolution, this unfortunate commander got out of his difficulties, as so many people do whose spirit is unequal to their troubles, by dying of them. There can be no more impressive evidence of the terrible weight of this leadership than that in two months it killed two men, neither of them able to cope with the responsibility. General Archdale Wilson, under whom Delhi was taken, was not an exceptional man any more than his predecessors ; but he had at least the advantage of their foundation to build upon, and passed, as it were, over their bodies, to eventual success. He, too, was all but made an end of, by the strain of body and mind, and had to retire worn out, as soon as he had done his piece of work, to the Hills, to recover health and spirit before proceeding further. Such is the cost at which such struggles are carried on. It is strange, however, for any one who recollects the dismay with which in England news of what seemed a most lingering and sluggishly conducted siege were received, to find in Sir Hope Grant's most modest and simple record the true history of the siege of Delhi : a narrative of active toil, continued attacks and repulses, unflinching watchfulness and exertion, such as has rarely been equalled. It is impossible to imagine any story in which there is less attempt at effect ; yet none could be more effective. Its absolute truth and simplicity move us, as if by the very voice of the speaker ; and it is only thus that we could truly see what wonderful amount of work there was to do, and how the handful of English assailants did it. They were but 2000 Europeans

with a few guns, in opposition to swarms of revolted sepoys—40,000 men according to one account,—and the entire population of a vast town—70,000 or 80,000 men,—all made desperate by the knowledge that their own brutalities had cut them off in case of defeat from all possibilities of mercy.

Here are a few examples of the difficulties encountered on the way—and of those against which the besiegers had to contend at every step of their progress. After the small English force had started for Delhi, they heard that Brigadier Wilson had obtained a small victory over the rebels, but was then hard pressed by them.

“The day following he had been again attacked, and the rebels had been again driven back ; but the heat was so fearful, and his men so exhausted, that he had found it impossible to follow up his victory. Wilson was now in a critical position, and I recommended Sir Henry to move on his troops to within 12 miles of Delhi, as the enemy could then hardly sally out to attack the former while we were so near. Sir Henry acted on this, established himself at Alipore, and Wilson was enabled to join us there on 7th June. We now found that the rebels had taken up a very strong position between us and Delhi, and about 5 miles from the latter town, at a place called Budlee-ka-Serai, which they had intrenched and armed with heavy guns. Sir Henry was much hampered in his dispositions owing to the smallness of his force, but his plan of attack was good. The main column was directed to proceed up the road and to make a direct attack on the enemy's position, and I was ordered to march with 3 squadrons of the 9th Lancers, and 10 guns, by a by-road to the right, cross the Western Jumna Canal about a mile higher up, advance along its wooded banks, where I should be quite concealed from view, recross the canal 6 miles higher up, and fall on the rebels in flank and rear. The 3 squadrons of the 9th Lancers were under Colonel Yule. The artillery force was com-

manded by Major Mackenzie, and consisted of Turner's, 6 9-pounders, and Tombs's 4 light 6-pounders, from Meerut. The latter battery was incomplete, owing to want of transport. At one o'clock in the morning of the 8th June we began our march, advanced as quietly as possible as far as our foremost picket, took the turn to the right, and crossed the canal. The road along its banks was excellent, but was so narrow that, had we been attacked, our guns would have been useless. We therefore marched across the fields, and for about a mile our progress was easy; but then we came to a swamp which extended over a wide district of country, and had been formed by the bursting of the canal-bank. It was some time before we overcame this difficulty; and when we were still two miles from our destined point of attack, the guns of the main body, which had proceeded by the direct road, began to open fire, the preconceived signal for us to commence operations. I therefore resolved to take to the canal-road, by which means we were enabled to proceed at a merry trot, recrossed the canal, and quickly came upon the rear of the enemy.

"Then the ground once more became very difficult, and intersected with ditches. Turner's heavy 9-pounders stuck fast, but Tombs's light guns managed to make their way to the front, and opened upon the rebels with great effect. The 9th Lancers behaved gallantly, charged into the midst of the enemy, captured a 9-pounder which the mutineers were endeavouring to withdraw, sabred its gunners, turned the gun upon a village where the enemy had taken refuge, and dislodged them from it. Colonel Yule killed three men with his own hand. At the same time the main body successfully stormed the intrenchment in their front. The 75th Regiment suffered severely; and Colonel Chester, the Adjutant-General, was killed by a round-shot."

Nor were the difficulties over when the town of Delhi—for all these skirmishes were nothing but accidents on the road—was gained. "The weather was so fearfully hot," Sir Hope informs us, "that the gunners could not handle the shot

wherewith to load the guns." And here is a mere sample of the daily journal, nothing in the least remarkable,—the kind of thing which he and his soldiers encountered, almost without thought—their everyday work. It is all the more interesting as affording a proof of the occasional chivalrous fidelity to be found even among the rebels.

"The safety of the camp had been intrusted to my charge, and I immediately proceeded, with a squadron of the 9th Lancers, 2 guns of Major Scott's battery, 2 of Major Turner's, and 2 of Captain Money's troop of horse-artillery, to the right of the Ochterlony gardens, about a mile to our rear in a north-westerly direction, in order to reconnoitre. To my surprise, I found the enemy in position half a mile farther on to our proper rear. On seeing my small force they opened a heavy fire against us, to which we responded with equal vigour. It was wonderful to see how the shot and shell fell among us without doing much harm: a grape-shot tore a pistol out of my holster-pipe, and I never saw it again. Our little army in camp, aroused by the firing, quickly turned out to support us, and we had a hard tussle for the mastery until 11.30 at night. The remaining squadrons of the 9th Lancers and the Guides horse charged a large body of the enemy on the Subzi-Mundi road; but with a ditch and houses on each side their action was paralysed, and our loss was severe. Amongst those who fell, I grieve to say, was Lieutenant-Colonel Yule of the 9th Lancers, as fine and gallant a soldier as ever lived. Captain Daly, too, was very severely wounded through the shoulders upon this occasion.

"As long as daylight lasted we drove the rebels back; but when darkness ensued they got round our flanks, and two of my guns (Money's, I think) were in the greatest jeopardy. I therefore collected a few men together and charged the enemy. A sepoy within five yards of me fired at my horse, and put a bullet through his body, close to my leg. It was singular he did not aim at me; but in all probability he thought it best to make sure of killing the horse, and that then, to a certainty,



the rider would fall into his hands. I felt that my poor charger had received its death-wound; yet he galloped on fifty yards through the throng of rebels, and then dropped down dead. I was in rather an awkward predicament—unhorsed, surrounded by the enemy, and, owing to the darkness, ignorant in which direction to proceed—when my orderly, a native Sowar of the 4th Irregulars, by name Rooper Khan, rode up to me, and said, 'Take my horse—it is your only chance of safety.' I could not but admire his fine conduct. He was a Hindostanee Mussulman, belonging to a regiment the greater part of which had mutinied; and it would have been easy for him to have killed me and gone over to the enemy; but he behaved nobly, and was ready to save my life at the risk of his own. I refused his offer; but, taking a firm grasp of his horse's tail, I told Rooper Khan to drag me out of the crowd. This he performed successfully and with great courage. I may here mention that the next morning I called him into my tent (he was a fine-looking fellow, of tall stature, about 25 years of age), and after praising him for his gallant behaviour, I offered him some little money; upon which he drew himself up with great dignity, salamed, and said, 'No, Sahib, I will take no money; but if you will get my commanding officer to promote me, I shall be very grateful.' I answered him that I would make a request to that effect, but urged him also to receive the money. He reluctantly took it and left the tent; but the next morning I received a note from his commanding officer, Major Martin, returning the rupees, and stating that Rooper Khan could not be prevailed upon to accept them. Major Martin promoted him; and in consequence of my favourable mention of him, Sir Henry Barnard awarded him the second-class order of merit. There were likewise two men of the 9th Lancers who behaved with great gallantry, Thomas Handcock and John Purcell. They stuck to me during the fight without consulting their own safety: the latter had his horse killed under him about the same time that I lost my own; and Handcock, seeing me dismounted in the midst of my foes, earnestly besought me to take

his charger. He was the same night wounded, and lost his arm. The enemy, however, did not persist in his attack, and by degrees the firing ceased. I don't think I ever felt so beat before. The weather was fearfully hot. I threw myself exhausted on the ground, and the only thing which revived me was a glass of beer, given me by Lieutenant Drummond, attached to the Rajah of Jheend's Horse, a Sikh who had recently joined us."

Many other incidents of the siege are deeply interesting had we space to quote them. We can find room only for the account of one strange deliverance of a kind which pious people call providential, and people not pious can give no sort of account of. A great assault had been planned by the forces in Delhi against the tiny English army outside their walls. It was on the occasion of a religious festival, and accordingly everything was propitious; and though it was then the season of rains, there had been an intermission for nearly a fortnight, so that the ground was in perfectly good condition.

"The attack was well planned. A strong force was destined to proceed up the opposite bank of the Jumna which covered our left flank, cross by a bridge of boats at Bagput, take up a position in our rear at Rhye, and thus cut off our supplies from, and communications with, the upper country, and in fact starve us out. Another force of 6000, with 16 guns, were to cross the canal about three miles to our right and attack us in rear. Simultaneously the main body was to force our position in front, and on our flanks. The one told off for the attack on our rear advanced to the canal by the Rotuck road, and in a few hours constructed a bridge sufficiently strong to admit of the passage of artillery. Part of their cavalry had passed, and their artillery was on the point of following the example when a black cloud suddenly appeared overhead, followed by a terrific down-pour of rain, which converted the sluggish waters of the canal into a foaming torrent. The bridge was completely swept away, and the

strong powerful timbers of which it had been constructed, were washed down to our camp. The further advance of the enemy was now effectually put a stop to, not only on account of the destruction of the bridge, but because the surrounding country had become impassable. Their cavalry which had crossed were separated from their main body, and were in a terrible fright lest we should send out a force to cut them off. With difficulty they made their escape, by marching about sixteen miles up the canal, crossing by a bridge which we had not been able to destroy; from whence, crestfallen and in disorder, they made their way back to Delhi. The most remarkable circumstance connected with the above is, that at the very time the rain descended in such torrents on the enemy, we had not a single drop in our own camp. This was a wonderful interposition of Providence."

Such an incident must have impressed deeply the minds of the handful of Englishmen, fighting, as they were aware, a desperate battle, and therefore having all the better claim, their cause being just, on that God to whom they were used to say that He alone fighteth for us. They ran such risks almost daily, for the sorties were numerous; they had treason even among themselves, small as their following was, and were obliged to disband and dismiss a native regiment, whose English officers—with that strange obstinacy of faith which was one of the features of the period—held by them stoutly till the last moment, refusing to believe in any possibility of desertion. To such a point did this faith go, that Sir Hope Grant informs us the Adjutant-General, after assembling and haranguing the native officers, presented the chief among them with a fine horse, which he received with protestations of devotion. "That very evening the native officer galloped off on his beautiful horse, and went over to the enemy." Several troopers,

however, of this disbanded regiment remained examples of fidelity, as an offset against the treachery of the others.

The siege of Delhi lasted more than three months. The small army, badly furnished in every way, attacked and attacking almost daily, sometimes surrounded by almost impassable swamps, sometimes scorched under blazing suns, enduring, with little ease and perpetual fatigue, the worst that an Indian climate in its most terrible combination of fiery heat and fatal humidity could do, passed thus the months of June, July, and September, while England fumed and fretted over the sea, wondering and blaming its inaction. The siege-train only reached them on the 4th of September; and by that time, in consequence of the exertions made, chiefly by Sir John Lawrence, to reinforce them, their numbers altogether, including Sikhs, rose to 10,000. On the 13th September the final attack was made; and two days after, the vast crowd of insurgents were finally dispersed from the stronghold, and the city returned into British hands. We need not enter into details of a struggle which was accompanied by much desperate fighting, and by some losses on the English side which it would be difficult to overestimate. One of them, and perhaps the most important, was that of the brave General Nicholson, who was shot at the head of his brigade in an assault on the Lahore gate. There is a touch of genuine tragedy in the brief note made by Sir Hope of this brave soldier's deathbed.

"There was an unearthly stillness about the camp, very different to the bustle and activity which existed previous to the assault. As I entered the hut, the gloomy darkness was made visible by one miserable dimly-burning candle. On a couch I saw a figure lying



stretched at full length, with a native standing beside him. The ghastly look of death was upon his countenance; and, on going nearer, I perceived it was poor Brigadier Nicholson, whom I had last seen upon the walls of Delhi the day before, vigorous and animated, leading on his men gallantly. Everything was now changed for him—ambition, the hopes of rising to greatness—all was vanishing from before his eyes. He was like a noble oak riven asunder by a thunderbolt. As I approached he looked towards me, and in a deep sepulchral voice said, ‘Who are you?’ I told him, and spoke some kind words to him. He looked again, and after some time, with great difficulty, said, ‘I thank you;’ and then closed his eyes.”

Seldom has the death of a strong man, struck down in mid-career, been represented with more powerful and tragical brevity, simple as are the words in which this heart-chilling picture is made.

Here terminates the more painful part of the narrative. It is true that the double episode of Lucknow kept England still on a strain of tremendous emotion scarcely equalled, perhaps, by anything called forth by a public event within the limits of this century at least; but all that was most appalling and cruel was now over, and the subduing of the mutiny became rather a matter of time than a desperate possibility. Havelock, Outram, Sir Colin Campbell, were all by this time in the field, men not likely to lose their heads in an emergency, and prepared, so far as calm courage, self-possession, and readiness of resource could prepare them, for everything that might befall them.

The episode of Lucknow to which we have just referred was, however, of all others the most prolonged in tragic interest. The other great misfortunes of the English in India were known at least in England only after the occurrence; but for Lucknow we all, who are

old enough to recollect it, went through all the vicissitudes of hope and fear as much as if the besieged city had been an individual sufferer of our closest acquaintance. The death of Sir Henry Lawrence, one of the finest and noblest of those Christian soldiers who have made our English army illustrious, in the very commencement of that long agony, undergone by the cooped up remnant of British sufferers within the Residency—had given a melancholy tone at once to their story, and added discouragement to the misery they endured so bravely. Everybody remembers the heroic march of Havelock to their relief—a march which was little less than a succession of battles against overwhelming numbers—his own little force never rising at its best beyond 2500 men, against armies five or six times as great, and often more. How he fought his way mile by mile; how the gallant and chivalrous Outram, on joining him, waived his superior rank and served as a volunteer, rather than take from his brother-in-arms the honour of concluding what he had so well begun; and how he relieved Lucknow only to be in his turn shut in, and to endure once more all the calamities of the siege which he had momentarily relieved, we need not attempt to tell over again. Havelock had served for many years humbly and without much notice, doing the work of a good soldier; but in this moment of extremity his turn came to show what was in him, and the unobtrusive Indian officer leaped at once into our national roll of heroes. The unfortunate concurrence of events which made him a prisoner in the very fortifications from whence he had so hasted and fought to deliver the captives, made his sudden glory only more noticeable. And it would be vain to attempt to describe the feelings of

the anxious and excited spectators in England when they found themselves called upon a second time to speculate whether deliverance would come in time, and to dread the possibility of the fall of Lucknow, with a second brave little army added to its first defenders.

The second siege had lasted for five or six weeks before we take up the story of the second deliverance in Sir Hope Grant's stirring narrative. He himself had been left in momentary inaction at Delhi while the troops scoured the neighbouring country, but had at last been sent for in haste, and was on his eager way to the succour of Lucknow when the newly appointed Commander-in-chief, Sir Colin Campbell—sent out at a day's notice by one of those highly wrought impulses of popular feeling which now and then drive the British government and nation to an infallible choice of the right man—joined his small forces. Sir Colin, too, had been long a good officer merely, known in his profession, but not much out of it, and had already begun to long for retirement and quiet, when sudden laurels fell upon the man who was all at once discovered to be the man whom England most wanted in her moment of extremity. "You little expected," said Sir Hope as they met, "when I last heard from you that you would be appointed Commander-in-Chief in India." "I should as soon have thought to be made Archbishop of Canterbury," said the other. It would be almost impossible to describe to any reader too young to recollect it, the feelings with which we in England watched the progress of the new Commander, whom we all felt somehow, individually, to be our special emissary for the salvation of India, upon that march to Lucknow. Sir Hope tells the story of the march itself in his usual self-controlled

and soldierly way—so many attacks of the enemy, so many difficulties of the road, marshes to drag the guns through, jungle to intercept the men, here "a heavy fire of infantry" suddenly opening upon them, there "an hour's pounding" with heavy guns to drive away a hostile outpost. The story of the excitement of a single peaceful family in England—its longing for news, its hopes and wild terrors, its perpetual discussion of what might be doing, and the close interest with which it followed every movement and watched for every mail—would, could we tell it in detail, be infinitely more emotional than the soldier's plain record of what he did from day to day, the bullets that played about him harmlessly, and all the various risks he ran, of which he makes nothing. By desperate fighting they struggled into the Residency, where they were welcomed with such enthusiasm as may easily be conceived, by the spent and weary garrison. But here, again, reality quite fails of the effect which imagination gives. "Soldiers," said Havelock, his eyes full of tears, to the men who flocked about him—"soldiers, I am happy to see you; soldiers, I am happy to think you have got into this place with a smaller loss than I had." But while these sober words were all that even the excitement of such a deliverance drew from the British general, with that obstinate incapacity for scenic effects that seems to mark the race—we at home found vent for our excitement in much more dramatic pictures of how the deliverance came. We remember a pretty story current at the time of how some Scotch lass, a soldier's daughter, was the first to hear from the rampart a far-off sound of the Highland pipes which announced the deliverers; how she was supposed to have gone crazy in her sudden joy; and how gradually that



craze of gladness communicated itself to all as the shrill sweet pibroch grew on the air, and the red-coats came in sight. The present writer owns to having put this story into verse, with some lingering hope that it might be true, in such a genuine passion of excitement as perhaps only youth is capable of. Nothing of this kind is in the simple narrative. Theirs was "a happy meeting" and much "cordial shaking of hands," says Sir Hope Grant, with true British quiet; and thus ended two terrible sieges and one of the most awful moments of suspense ever endured by any community,—suspense which the whole nation shared with the actual sufferers; for there was scarcely a man or woman in England who did not tremble to hear of another catastrophe such as that at Cawnpore until the beleaguered garrison and, above all, the women and children, were safe out of those dangerous walls.

The third expedition to Lucknow, undertaken only after this object was attained, and which ended in the complete dispersion of the rebels and re-possession of the city, though not less interesting in a military point of view nor less exciting as a warlike struggle, has no longer the dramatic and general interest of the former marches; and as we do not attempt to enter into any military review of the situation we will not follow the generals through the remaining campaign, which by degrees quenched all the sparks of evil, and reduced India again to quiet and subordination. Long ere this it had become apparent that this "brightest jewel in the British crown" was not going to be snatched from us, and that the momentary chill of disaster which had struck the heart of the nation, with the strangest mixture of fear, anguish, and incredulity, was as

temporary as any other sudden shock which sends back the blood to the heart, only to fortify both soul and body, in an instant, with strenuous impulse to resist the evil and win back the tranquillity assailed. The courage of England at home was at once recovered when the women and children were out of danger, and no new outrage such as those which had chilled our blood was possible. The courage of our soldiers had never flagged. They, subjected to perpetual perils, had gone about their work always with imperturbable self-possession. At a very dark moment indeed, just before the first assault on Delhi, Sir Hope Grant himself, struck with this amazing calm, pauses in his hasty tale to make a note upon it. He, himself a soldier, wonders, as any man well might, at the perfect calm of both officers and soldiers. "Men," he says, "seemed to regard the coming struggle as if it were a cricket match in which every one felt confident his side would win." There was even time for frolic after the first passion was over. It is only fair, however, to say that this was after the fall of Delhi and the deliverance of the Lucknow garrison had taken something of the sting out of the more horrible recollections of the war. We remember to have heard a somewhat dull officer, not ordinarily interesting in his conversation, tell the story of some portions of the earlier struggle with a fervour of recollection which turned his native dulness into dramatic force, and gave the hearer a sympathetic shudder, as he told of the grim look of the men when mercy was suggested to them, and how they said "Cawnpore!" to each other, with a stillness more terrible than any war cry, when they charged the enemy. There is little trace, however, of this wild vehemence of feeling in

Sir Hope Grant's story, and we read such an anecdote as the following, after all the more terrible recollections called forth by his narrative, with a certain sense of escape and relief.

"The 53d Regiment, principally composed of Irishmen, were a fine looking set of fellows, and equally good hands at fighting. Their discipline, however, was not by any means perfect, and it was difficult to keep them well in hand. They had been lying under the bank of a road which afforded but an inadequate protection, and had in consequence lost a good many men. All of a sudden, without a word from any of their officers, they rushed forward, and, utterly heedless of all efforts to stop them, made their way into the toll-house, in a few instants clearing out the enemy. The Commander-in-Chief was terribly annoyed, and riding up to the regiment, pitched into it well. But these wild Irishmen were incorrigible; whenever he began to speak, a lot of them exclaimed as loud as they could, 'Three cheers for the Commander-in-chief, boys!' until at last he himself was obliged to go away laughing."

A little while after this incident, we hear, with a pleasant sense of the always lessening cloud, of a sudden adventurous outburst made by Sir Hope and his brother officers "to see their wives," from whom they had been separated through all the painful and anxious time now happily almost at an end—an expedition upon which they seem to have set out with all the glee of delivered schoolboys, and which Sir Colin, grim but kindly old bachelor, permitted with humorous contempt and probably a touch of envy. By-and-by they could hear with pleasure of "some good pig-sticking," and "put up a large fox which gave us a fine chevy." Thus the time of misery and disaster came to an end, and the ordinary conditions of life, those common laws and common incidents which outlive all despairs

and troubles, resumed their usual sway on the very edge of the hurricane past.

It is, however, with a shudder that we find, very sparingly given—for Sir Hope does not seem to have any disposition to linger upon horrors—some details here and there which call back to us with startling vividness the feelings which rendered us half crazy with excitement and horror at the time. Here is one brief but terrible incident. Some poor people, officers with their wives and children, had taken refuge with the Rajah of Powaen, who soon, however, tired of them, and sent them off with an escort of their own revolted native soldiers.

"After the first day's march, two young officers, mere boys, who had just joined, being excessively fatigued and footsore, lagged behind, whereupon some of the Sepoys began pricking them up with their bayonets. One of the captains remonstrated with these brutes. The two poor lads, however, could not get on any faster, and the villains immediately put their muskets to their heads and shot them. One of the party, a lady whom we had known very well at Umballa, was expecting her confinement, and was quite upset by all the horrors she had been forced to pass through. Her husband, in desperation at the fate which was evidently impending over them, shot her; another officer followed his example with his wife; and then the Sepoys fell upon their prisoners and murdered them all."

Never was there a simpler, less emotional record of perhaps the most terrible condition of affairs in which civilised men ever found themselves. *Her husband, in desperation, shot her.* It is impossible to conceive a more frightful climax of mortal anguish and misery.

Here, however, is a pendant, in the dismal reversal of positions later on, when the mutiny was all but quelled, and the wretched remnants of the rebel forces were being pur-



sued in all directions, flying in broken parties over the country, having lost all hope, courage, and possibility of existence.

"On the 23d May, we followed up the enemy across the hills, and came to some ground dabbled with pools of blood, where wounded men had been struggling on; and farther on discovered two of the rebels in a state of hopeless exhaustion, dying from their wounds and from starvation. It was sad to see many of the poor wives of the Sepoys who had accompanied their husbands, deserted and left to die on the bare ground. One of these wretched women was lying in the last stage of exhaustion, and sinking fast, with her long black hair hanging dishevelled about her face,—one child at her breast, and another standing by her side. I told one of my staff to fetch a doolie for her and her children. When she heard the order, she roused herself up and gave a look of wild and unutterable joy, thinking in all probability that her poor starving babies would be saved; but the effort was too much for her, and she again sank back into her previous position. The sight was truly touching. Poor creature, she was put into a doolie and taken care of. She ultimately recovered."

A more remarkable contrast could scarcely be—the rebel sepoy's wife taken up tenderly in the arms of charity and brought back from the very edge of death to life and safety—the English officer's wife, shot in a tragic passion of despair and love, to save her from a worse fate, by her husband. It is good to be able to believe that the avenging English paused, while they carried fire and flame through the country, to do many such acts of Christian charity, though we fear it is impossible to doubt that many wild deeds, unmodified by any exercise of Christian feeling, might find a place in the chronicles of that swift and sudden re-establishment of power. There is scarcely, however, any trace of these cruelties and fierce reprisals in Sir Hope Grant's narrative. The

only case in which anything of the kind is recorded is immediately after the siege of Delhi, when a too zealous officer found out the hiding-place of three grandsons of the old Mogul, supposed to have taken a part in the massacre of the English in Delhi. "They tried to exculpate themselves from blame, and denied the guilt; but Hodson charged them with having killed the ladies and gentlemen who had taken refuge in the palace, or had been made prisoners; and taking a revolver from his belt, with his own hand he shot the three unhappy wretches dead on the spot. This sad act," writes Sir Hope, "was most uncalled for." It is almost the only instance of lawless vengeance recorded here, though we are afraid there can be little doubt that many other such fierce revenges were taken, when the civilised man, still wild with the thrill of indignant passion, had at length reprisal in his power.

It will be seen from the quotations we have made that there is no attempt at fine writing in Sir Hope Grant's manly journal. It is the daily record of his career, as modest, and as little thoughtful of self as it is possible to be, and is as good an instance of the power of soldierly simplicity and straightforwardness to take all fanfaronade of heroism out of actions truly heroic, as we remember to have seen. This is not an art cultivated much, so far as we know, out of the British dominions, but it is a curious art in its way; for the process of toning down all the excitement of danger, and the stir and glow of blood which must accompany the terrible emergencies of war, into something that looks as matter-of-fact as a surveyor's diary, is more delicate than the process of heightening the colours, and bringing out the higher lights, of which military records in other quarters furnish us with many examples.

And the struggle recorded with such brief and plain simplicity was no ordinary campaign. It was neither more nor less than the reconquest of the most important part of India, the richest and most populous portion of our eastern possessions, and indeed the re-establishment throughout the entire continent of our menaced power; for there can be little doubt that had the insurrection succeeded in Bengal, as at first it seemed likely to do, the fire would soon have spread to the other Presidencies, in both of which there were slight and quickly suppressed stirrings of excitement. What the handful of Europeans had to do, accordingly, in the climate so fatal to them, at a season when every effort is generally made to shelter them from the terrible splendour of the tropical sun, was to take back out of the hands of myriads of natives the vast country to which by nature those natives had the best right, in which they were perfectly at home, and which was no more noxious to them in its fiery heat and tropical storms than the blasts of a Scotch hillside to the plumed and plaided Highlander, who tramped across the burning plains to Lucknow at the hourly hazard of his life. Even the natives were utterly changed since the days of their first subjugation—they were trained and disciplined soldiers, taught by Englishmen, armed by Englishmen with the most deadly weapons that modern skill had framed; they ought to have known how to fight as well as their opponents; and they were inspired by all the strongest of human excitements, patriotism (so far as they knew the meaning of the word) and that overwrought excitement of religious feeling which we call fanaticism; and the fierce opposition of race against race, the slave against the master, not always personally considerate of

him. All these conjoined to make “the mild Hindoo” a most formidable enemy—not to speak of the last and most urgent peril of all, the desperation of inevitable death and ruin should they fail. They fought, as we say, with halts round their necks, victory being their only chance. Yet with all these inspirations in their favour, with the climate and their congenial habits as against the beef-eating, strong-drink-consuming European, and with an overwhelming superiority in point of numbers, the Eastern failed to hold his own. In May 1857 the wild and sudden storm broke forth upon us, sweeping into destruction many a little centre of English society, and destroying entire families, innocent sacrifices for their country’s supremacy. For all that tremendous summer the fate of India hung in the balance; but before the year was over, the handful of invaders had regained the half-lost power, and the greatest and richest alien country that ever was subject to a foreign race fell once more, worn out and abject, under the British sway. It is almost impossible to believe that so many great events and so many overwhelming emotions could be possible within so short a cycle of time, or that England should have fumed and fretted with impatience, as she did, over so enormous a piece of work completed so soon. We said that if it were possible that the British power had entered upon that period of decadence which seems to come to all great powers in their time, the Indian mutiny would probably appear to the historian the first menace of failure: but when we look at this extraordinary event from its other side—when we contemplate its end rather than its beginning, we doubt whether the facts would bear that interpretation. The momentary catastrophe was terrible; but the



recovery, the stand at bay, the swift and tremendous reaction were more wonderful still; and strength cannot have begun to fail in the arms, which in a year's time recovered India from her own hordes, and placed the yoke again upon her mighty shoulders.

It is far from a pleasant reflection, however, that we hold in our hands so vast an empire with so very little understanding of the mind, and thoughts, and meaning of its inhabitants as to be thus betrayed in a moment, without, up to this time, any very clear ideas why we were betrayed. From whence came the mysterious impulse which set all these myriads—so crafty yet so primitive, so wonderfully capable of conspiracy, and so strangely incapacitated (as it would seem) for any vigorous and persevering action—into motion? We cannot tell; nor can we be sure that some strange inexplicable fiery cross, chupatty, or other incomprehensible communication, may not pass through them like the wind to-morrow, arousing another and another outburst. Captain Knollys points out this strange and dangerous ignorance in some telling pages of his introduction. We have books enough about India, missionaries, teachers, professors, innumerable apparatus of investigation; yet we seem to know less about the Hindoo than Clive and Warren Hastings did. We had the gratification to hear not long ago an eloquent and vehement invective from Mr Ruskin upon the learned foolishness of the physiologist, who could tell him all about the anatomy of the bird he was studying, but nothing about its life or habits. This peculiarity of modern science is perhaps rather a perilous one; for, after all, the irrigation of India, or its taxation, or even its Government, are less important than its inhabitants, who have it in them,

as we have seen, to slay our children, and torture them, and thereby carry misery and horror even into English houses far removed from the scene of conflict. Might it not be worth our while to study a little the millions of our fellow-creatures who possess this tremendous power, and to impress upon the minds of the young "competition wallahs," who now stream out to India full of every kind of unnecessary knowledge, the extreme expediency of understanding the races among whom they have to live, and at the same time the impossibility of ever understanding or coming to any human relationship with races whom they despise?

There are some pleasant glimpses throughout Sir Hope Grant's book of the still greater soldier who completed the reconquest of India, and of whom the journalist speaks with that delightful mixture of manly devotion and fresh schoolboy feeling, as to a more genial master than ever master was, which are very agreeable to the reader. It seems almost a pity that the common forms of honour inevitable among us should have obliterated the familiar name of Sir Colin Campbell, friendliest and most characteristically English of all titles, under the disguise of Lord Clyde—a name which he seems himself to have adopted with some reluctance, coming as it did at the close of his life, and untransmissible, as he had no direct heir. Some of his letters which are printed in the Appendix give us a touching glimpse of the weariness and home-longing which had come upon the good soldier, before he had risen to anything beyond that professional reputation which is the forerunner of other glory. He was tired of India and tired of monotonous undistinguished work in those dull days before the Crimea and before the Mutiny, which stir-

ring times dispersed all tedium and developed his abilities and his fame. "If they will only give us one year—not less—of *batta*," he writes in 1849, "I shall be able to think of leaving this country. I neither care, nor do I desire, for *anything else* but the little money in the shape of *batta*, to make the road between the camp and the grave a little smoother than I could otherwise make it out of the profession; for I long to have the little time that may remain to me to myself, away from barracks and regimental or professional life, with the duties that belong to it in a time of peace." "They have made me a K.C.B.," he writes again a little later. "I may confess to you that I would much rather have got a year's *batta*, because the latter would enable me to leave this country a year sooner and to join some friends of my early days, whom I love very much, and in whose society I would like to spend the period which may yet remain to me to live between the camp and the grave."

Touching words,—full of weariness and a sense of the fruitlessness of the camp life, with its routine duties of peace, and its blank of monotonous existence. "The day I leave this country will terminate my military career," he adds, emphatically, not foreseeing the Alma and Inkerman, nor the march to Lucknow, and the recovery of India. Before these great events

had come, the weary soldier was justified in his longing to escape to the friends he loved; but when danger arose, these longings were quickly put aside. Perhaps there never were two more notable instances of the sudden blossoming out into heroic use and work, of lives long held captive in the husk, unable to show what was in them—than we have in Havelock and Sir Colin Campbell, both of them almost old men before the moment came in which their powers could be revealed. Had they died only a few years earlier, no one would have known, beyond at least their immediate circle, that these two unobtrusive officers carried metaphorically the marshal's baton in their knapsacks; yet in dying, these true and honest soldiers would have left no murmur or discontent; nothing worse than perhaps a sigh of weariness behind them. Fortunately they lived long enough to serve their country as brilliantly in full light of day as they had served her faithfully in the shade. Such men must always be the very highest and noblest distinction of British arms; and so long as we retain the race of them, we may, in all emergencies, defy the world. But, notwithstanding, it will always be hard upon our heroes that emergencies come but seldom, and that in ordinary times England is rarely wise enough or bright enough to find them out.

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## THE NEW YEAR'S POLITICAL ASPECT.

IF Rip van Winkle or any other celebrated sleeper had finished a nap in the course of last autumn, there would have been a world of strange things to explain to him; but there are certain truths which his own observation might have made abundantly clear, albeit he would know nothing of how they had come to pass. For instance, he could have had no doubt about the period of existence to which the Ministry had attained, any more than he would about the age of a horse, born during his slumber, whose mouth he could inspect. Individuals, we know, have modes of thought and feeling and utterance proper to their times of life. In youth the imagination stretches forward to overtake the future, the mind is engrossed with expectation and design, the tongue is eloquent with the promises prompted by life and vigour. In manhood and middle age, although it may be pleasant to look upon something already achieved as an earnest of power, yet the regard is still forward, the desire is to complete the programme, and the tone, though tempered to caution by the rubs of life, is hopeful still, more decided perhaps now that the objects to which labour is directed are plainly seen. It is not until "the lean and slippered pantaloon" stage has been reached that there is a gradual closing of all prospect, and the soul which has done its work of good or evil is fain to ruminate upon the past, in fancy living over again, with a difference, its finished career, and endeavouring to illuminate with brilliant colours its passages and adventures. The fairy colouring of which these retrospects are susceptible is familiar to us all. The scenes of a

commonplace, an unscrupulous, a feeble, or even a vicious life, thought over again in mellow age, and described by a voice no longer big and manly, but which "pipes and whistles in the sound," are often so transformed as to seem epic, or pathetic, or exciting. Poor old Shallow's reminiscences, one remembers, drew from Sir John Falstaff the reflection, "Lord, Lord, how subject we old men are to this vice of lying!" Much excuse is made for this romancing in the aged and effete, seeing that they have little else to console themselves with; and indeed this highly-coloured retrospection is commonly regarded as a characteristic of senility. Now it is by this characteristic that Rip van Winkle might determine that the Ministry has gone some way past its meridian. For many months Ministers have done nothing but boast of their past achievements, as Shallow did of the mad pranks he had done about Turnbull Street. They have not said in words that they have made the enemies of England tremble, or caused treaties to be respected, or maintained the national honour inviolate. They have not quite said that they have made Ireland tranquil and happy, that they have decreased our public expenses, or that the Army and Navy are the better for their Administration; but they have certainly implied some things of the kind, and wished us to believe that they have been men of astounding exploits, else what means this endless chorus of self-praise? While we excuse the tumid stuff, we must recollect the ground on which we excuse it, namely, that it is the recreation of men who have acted their part, who can do no more, and who de-

light to wrap themselves and their hearers in the past, as if the world were going to stand still henceforth and devote itself to the study of *their* history—the noblest study of mankind, according to the new version.

It would be a waste of words, and rather a cruelty, to show to the complacent talkers the picture of themselves as we see them; at the same time, every section of the community ought to be warned against accepting these senile hallucinations as sober history. To their audience, if not to them, somebody ought to exhibit them in their real colours, as Falstaff portrayed Shallow, and we care not if we become the limners.

We do remember these crowing Ministers when, five years ago, they were going up and down the country begging for office, and telling the people of the great things they would do for them. Benefits innumerable, and dirt cheap, may be said to have been the burden of their song. Flattering promises were, however, no novelty to the British public, and simply to be profuse of promises would not take candidates for office very far with the electors. It was seen to be necessary that the promises should be uncommonly plausible, and that the people should be persuaded of both the will and the ability of the aspirants to make good their professions. And this was done cleverly, if not creditably. The impression was industriously and widely given, that the promises now submitted were entirely unlike anything of the kind that had been offered before; they were the sacred engagements of men who were far above worldly considerations, noble, unselfish, devoted. The men also represented all the ability of the country, but this was a secondary consideration, for what was principally wanted was integrity. Government was a simple art

enough, if only honest men could be got to exercise it. If we had had disappointments in that line, it was because we had put the affairs of the commonwealth into the hands of rogues and fools. But now, if we only chose to employ a batch of functionaries such as were never before within the reach of any country, wise as serpents and harmless as doves, we should soon see on what easy terms we might be rich, powerful, respected, peaceful, and happy. The device was marvellously successful; our people bit hard, and was hooked.

It is necessary to look back carefully, and to take especial note of the pretension to exceptional virtue made by the Ministry in its early days, if we would understand its career, because, somehow or other, as time has worn on, the virtue has been clean forgotten, and become as a thing out of mind. Experience, truly, has shown our rulers to be not as other men are, but it is principally in the articles of courage, capacity, respect for the laws, and regard for the honour of the country, that they differ from other men. However, the virtue, whether a truth or a fiction, was undoubtedly a power. It was preached, chanted, and believed in; it was the sure anchor of temperate and patient men, and among enthusiasts it excited a positive *furor*: they believed that the millennium, or something very like it, was in the gift of the coming Cabinet. Any one who will take the trouble to look back to the autumn of 1868 may remember how intensely men were affected,—we don't mean weak or visionary men only, but some of the profoundest thinkers and calmest reasoners of the day. The late Mr J. S. Mill, for instance, seemed to lose his equilibrium altogether at thought of the glorious dispensation that was dawning.



As if old things were passing away, and all things becoming new, he cast aside regard for custom, good manners, and fair dealing, and began to interfere with elections, and dictate to constituencies, as if the whole land had been as demented as himself, and saw in him the appointed evangelist of the good things that were at hand.

While he was so solicitous about the filling of other seats he lost his own. He was alive then, and there were many who scrupled not to say that he made a fool of himself; nobody will say that now, but it is at any rate certain that he did not, by his conduct at that period, add to his great reputation. We have selected Mr Mill as an eminent example, but of course there were thousands of smaller minds misled when a mind like his could lose its balance. This assumption of superior virtue certainly did work wonders among the people. It served its purpose admirably at the elections; but it contained within it, as it were, the seeds of disgrace, probably of ruin, to the men who used it. The nation has not forgotten, and will not forget, that it believed and accepted the promises made in 1868 on the ground that they were promises made by men of unswerving virtue—promises therefore which were sure to be fulfilled. Now for a long time the omen has been observable that the virtue has been eliminated altogether by the people from the attributes of the Ministry: in other words, the security which made the promises pass current has been found to be a delusion. Ministers appear not to understand this, for after painting up their achievements, and putting them in all sorts of lights and combinations, to their own delight and ecstasy, as if they were beads in a kaleidoscope, they turn round and demand of the people why they are

so ungrateful as not to admire and laud them too. They do not perceive how they overdid their work when the only object was to get votes. They cannot discern that, the virtue being the foundation of the favour which they found, when that was seen to be moonshine, trust in them must have failed, even if their acts had not been so worthless as they have. It is anything but pleasant to men to be reminded how they have been imposed upon; and a little meditation on this truth may, to some extent, explain why no hurrah greets the reference to 1868. The virtue, which was an aid at the beginning, has been a hindrance and an incubus ever since. How many times Ministers must have wished that they had taken the field at first as only moderately honest people!

Having thus begged attention to the virtue, which we take to have been the keystone of the Radical fabric, let us briefly note some of the benefits which we were taught to expect. At the head of the list was a contented and happy Ireland—desired by England more than much fine gold, perhaps the dearest wish of her heart. Then we were to have great diminution of the public expenditure—a rather favourite idea of England, too, provided it means anything more than starving her services, and making her simply go without what is necessary to her safety and dignity; and what it meant in this case was made abundantly clear to us. We were to be better served than ever, although at far less cost. Efficiency and economy were to go hand in hand. Moreover, we were to have the blessing of peace. Wars, we were given to understand, were simply the blunders of arrogant, blustering, unscrupulous statesmen. Only let the reins get into virtuous hands, and it would soon be seen how, by perse-

vering in an inoffensive, moderate, unpretending course, regarding our neighbours' rights as well as our own, we should not only avoid contention, but gain from the love of foreign nations ten times more than we could have extorted from their fears. Besides these grand results were to come smaller blessings, their necessary concomitants, as a reformed army and navy, perfected domestic legislation, and so on; but the three promises we first mentioned—viz., Reconciled Ireland, Economy with Efficiency, and Honourable Peace, may be called the cardinal points of the covenant. Whatever the means were to be, these were to be the ends; and a loud and lengthy chorus we heard about these ends, so that we are not likely to forget them. But it happens now that when the talented and virtuous rulers are raking up their mighty deeds and challenging our applause, they quite forget to say anything about the ends, while they are stunningly eloquent about the means. We have passed such and such measures; we have enacted so many laws;—as if to grind off statutes by machinery, as it were, were meritorious; as if legislation were to be measured by its quantity, not its quality. But there is a silence, not difficult to understand, about the effects of those statutes—those grand results, so often predicted. No Minister dares to say, *We have regained the heart of Ireland*, or *We have diminished the expenditure of the country*, or *We have maintained an honourable peace*. What marvel, then, if, when they pause in their windy orations for the people's cheers, they are answered at the best with laughter, but more frequently with expressions of indignation!

But these Ministers, so thirsty for applause, have not simply failed to bring about the blessings which

they promised: they have literally produced their opposites. They have made Ireland more turbulent, more disaffected, than ever she was; they have increased, instead of diminished, the public expenditure; while they kept peace, they did so at the expense of honour: but now they no longer keep peace at all, but have launched us in an ignominious war. A more complete, a more palpable failure, it is impossible to conceive!

We have so frequently had to comment upon the particular mistakes, and the character of them, that we need enter into no detail now, more especially as the whole series was lately taken to pieces and exposed by a master's hand at Glasgow. Let the reader but reflect on the state of anxiety in which every man now lives who may have an interest in the Church, or in Church property, or in the Army or Navy, or any of the public services, or whom any national or other endowment may concern, and he will comprehend why no bonnet is thrown up, and the silence is broken only by groans when Ministers demand applause. It was said several months ago by a weekly contemporary ('The Spectator'), which made a philosophical examination of the cause of the head of the Government being *hated*, that a good deal of the hatred (if hatred be the right term) is attributable to fear; but we would qualify this by adding that it is fear of a particular kind, such fear as people living near a powder-magazine might feel if they saw a boy with a lighted torch in his hand rushing about among the barrels. It is a kind of fear which provokes anxiety rather than hatred; but whatever be its nature, a perusal of that exposition, written by a friendly hand, might have convinced the unhappy setters of clap-



traps that they had no applause to expect.

While we say this, we are conscious how refreshing a little popular commendation would have been in this dreary autumn, when the Cabinet, notwithstanding the glory of its retrospective visions, would seem to have been in a very bad way indeed. The outward signs can be accounted for only by imagining an interior so diseased that dissolution was imminent. The remedies, sometimes feeble and inexplicable to outsiders, at others desperate, have been announced with such frequency and continuance that one must suppose the crisis not to have ended yet, and that the patient's state is anything but hopeful. Most people would have thought the shuffling of the cards which took place just after Parliament rose was enough to change the luck, if shuffling could do it. A very random shuffle it seemed to be; but we know that in shuffling cards generally we do not seek to pack them according to any order of our own, but leave fortune to arrange them. In the curious resetting of all the gems, that talisman of diplomacy, Ripon of Washington, had no place found for him; but the others all showed again with altered framings. This "changing rounds," as they call it at artillery drill, did not produce a Cabinet of sufficient vigour to be able to face the trials of government. Some startling move was necessary; and this was discovered in the re-installation of Mr Bright in a Cabinet office, Mr Childers making way for him.

After a long and a very serious illness, Mr Bright once more appeared at Birmingham as a Minister. In his written address to his constituents, he explained that it had been necessary to assign to him an office whose duties were extremely light; and, in a subsequent com-

munication, he was said to have expressed a doubt whether the state of his nervous system would admit of his making a public address, or whether his physician would sanction such a proceeding. Now from this it is manifest that there was some extreme pressure on the Cabinet generally, and on Mr Bright. Invalids with their infirmities still distressing them do not generally for pleasure, or out of wanton folly, seek employments which are sure to tax their strength much, and may tax it to a perilous extent. In ordinary circumstances, or even under a moderate pressure of circumstances, Mr Bright, we may feel sure, would not have appeared upon a platform till his health was re-established. There was, without doubt, some *dignus vindice nodus*,—some internal disorder of the Cabinet most likely—which obliged Mr Bright to leave his couch, throw off his gown and slippers, and, regardless of consequences, to offer himself, still unhappily in broken health, to the rubs, bruises, and smarts of official life. Some of our contemporaries were not slow in discovering what they thought a sufficient reason for his reappearance. A new dispensation, so they said, was to be preached. None so fitly as Mr Bright could be its prophet. Gladstone and Dissenters reconciled was its glad tidings. But we take leave to doubt whether the proclamation of atonement at all required Mr Bright to come prematurely off the sick-list. The subsequent moves were not in harmony with this idea. Internal derangement of the most threatening character can alone account for the inconvenience and risk to which the Right Honourable Chancellor of the Duchy was subjected. It is true that, once on the platform as of old and facing the accustomed audience, he roused him-

self like an old war-horse at the sound of the trumpet, and spoke with his accustomed fluency and force. But the fibre of ancient days was not there; the effort was exhausting; and the position, unfortunately, was somewhat less independent than of yore. Indeed it was clear from the apologies and repudiations which he made, that Mr Bright found himself embarrassed in announcing the step which he had just taken—and naturally so. If in old days a used-up Tory had emerged from his sick-room to fill a sinecure place and draw a round salary, can we doubt whose tongue would have been loudest in railing at him—loudest in denouncing the whole Government and system of Government of the country, and in charging everybody with corruption who did not rise to put down the damning scandal? Any one who can answer this question will understand the pang which Mr Bright must have felt on presenting himself before an audience in whom he had always endeavoured to cultivate liberal and patriotic sentiments, as the acceptor of an office for the imperfect execution of the duties of which he had, by reason of his physical condition, to pray every one's indulgence. We say nothing of the iniquity of preferring an invalid to a post whose duties, the public expects, will be performed with promptness, regularity, and vigour. It is quite useless to make remarks on the gross abuses of patronage that we are compelled to witness: only the action of the people can deliver us from that. But, as we were saying, Mr Bright himself must have suffered severely at finding himself in such a position; and, unfortunately, it was not long before other punishment, besides his own sense of humiliation, overtook him. Writers in the public prints set on him directly, questioning the accu-

racy of his statements, denying his accounts and conclusions, demanding to know the real meaning of his revisiting the glimpses of politics, and we know not what besides. Soothing treatment this for a man with weakened nerves and enfeebled body!

Independently of his bodily condition, there were strong reasons why Mr Bright should have kept himself aloof from ministerial responsibilities. Since he left the Cabinet, it had committed itself to sundry things which were in direct contravention of his well-known opinions and maxims. He told us himself that his late colleagues had passed the worst Liberal measure since 1832, meaning the Education Act; and we know, without his telling us, that they have raised the public expenditure to a figure which he said would deprive any Ministry of his confidence, and that they have gone to war. Now Mr Bright was entirely quit for all these things as long as he remained a private member of Parliament; but he assumed responsibility for them all as soon as he again joined the Cabinet. He felt this himself; for he made about the Education Act excuses, which some troublesome people have since shown to be not strictly reconcilable with facts: he endeavoured, in a written statement, to shift the blame of the great expenditure on to the shoulders of the people; and, as the war was a stubborn fact which could not be gainsaid, he proposed to withdraw by-and-by altogether from the Gold Coast—which seemed like drawing on the future for a handsome *douceur*, on condition that the patriots of Birmingham winked hard at present inconsistency. Yes, Mr Bright certainly felt his position to be an awkward one, and therefore we are convinced that he did not willingly seek it. It was nat-



ter of life or death, probably, to the Government, or seemed at the time to be so, to their hard-run chief; and we are afraid it may have something to do with the life or death of Mr Bright's reputation. He has a long, consistent career to appeal to; but he is no longer consistent, nor even intelligible. Was it for him, the champion of the fiendish negroes in Jamaica, to join himself to a forlorn Ministry which was pursuing with steel and fire whole tribes of Africans on their own continent? Cutting the throats of white wretches would have been bad enough, and not in strict conformity to George Fox; but cutting up men and brothers—we *are* surprised!

When England entered upon the Crimean war, no consideration could induce Mr Bright to withhold his censure. He lost his popularity; he lost his seat in Parliament; and he was burned in effigy at Manchester; yet he never flinched from saying what he believed to be right, and utterly condemning war. That party which thought war to be in no circumstances justifiable might then be, and doubtless they were, proud of Mr Bright, a martyr to his principles. But how must that party feel now? Not only has Mr Bright refrained from denouncing the present war,—he has rejoined the Ministry while it is engaged in the war. He is no longer the uncompromising advocate of peace. He can stomach a little strife, now that he is a Minister. But the Peace party?—They have got no sinecure offices: they have no ministerial friends to replace old connections: they must regard war and violence as they regarded them of old. What will they say to this defection? They helped a sturdy, and, as he then seemed, an unwavering politician to power, in order that he might enforce their views

upon Ministers and Parliament, and behold! he has gone over to the other side, and become an accessory to the war. We lament this as much as Mr Bright's old adherents can lament it. Consistent public men are not so common, that we can see a man who was crewhile one of the sternest of them fall away so from his old line of conduct without bewailing the change.

But to return to the Ministry. It would seem that the Cabinet has been already shaken in the purpose for the realisation of which Mr Bright was thought to have reappeared. Mr Forster has spoken since Mr Bright, and the last *oyez* proclaims that the Dissenters are to get nothing but fair words after all. Will Mr Bright be able to keep them loyal to the Ministry under such circumstances, or may we expect to hear that they have once more turned and rebelled against it? However time may answer this question, it is next to certain, from the changes of men and the changes of purpose, that it has been a work of the greatest difficulty to keep the ministerial machine at work at all; and we shall not be astonished if disruptions show themselves openly before long.—These, however, are not yet before the country, and there is plenty of clear and evident testimony against the Government on which opinions can be formed. It is curious how its apologists meet the overwhelming charges which were lately pushed home with such effect by Mr Disraeli. "We don't want," said they, "to deny these little blunders and jobs and failures, and so on—not at all: we admit them all, and were, at the times when they happened, as severe upon them as Mr Disraeli or anybody else can be. But, after all, why make such a fuss about them? A Ministry can't be five years in office without making some little mistakes;

indeed politics would be insufferably dull if they were not now and then enlivened by exhibitions of human weakness." Quite so: a job or a *fiasco* gives a flavour to affairs, just as a slice of quince improves the taste of an apple-tart; but how if the apple-tart be, as the Irishman supposed it, made *all* of quinces? that Irish idea seems most closely to illustrate the case.

We wish to keep very clearly before the country the persuasion which we hold as to the pretence of the failures, and blunders, and jobs, being only the seasoning of a long catalogue of sound work. We understood Mr Disraeli to say, and we certainly mean ourselves to say, that the bulk of the ministerial measures, reckoning from the formation of the Government, have been decided failures, if they do not come under the heads of blunders or jobs. A little while since this was as good as admitted by the Liberal press, which, by its appeal to posterity, seemed to abandon hope of any of the legislation or policy being looked upon as meritorious by living Englishmen. But the results of the Bath and Taunton elections revived their courage a little, and they are willing to strike one more stroke for present victory, before they sink again into the position of appellants. "Don't you know," is the language produced by this reflux of courage,—"don't you know that the ministerial measures had the sanction of the British Parliament and the British nation? therefore if you desire to find favour with the people, be careful what you say. The independent Briton is not likely to be impressed by arguments which are intended to prove that a series of measures into which he threw himself heart and soul were worse than failures, worse than useless—indeed, that they were positive injuries. It is no longer the Ministry who

must answer your attack; it is the whole country which supported the Ministers, and endorsed their acts." This reasoning is, to say the least, ingenious; and if the contest were merely a war of wits, if great issues affecting the safety and honour of the country were not about to be joined, it might attract some applause. But clever quips are not what the electors want now; they desire a fair, historical review of a most important period in our history, to guide them truly as to the hands to which they shall next commit the conduct of affairs. And this in sooth is but a clever quibble. If the British people had desired the destruction of the Irish Church and all the upas-tree clearings, absolutely and independent of consequences, our opponents would have been justified in their manner of putting the case. But the country was not moved by a desire of despoiling the Irish Church or Irish landlords simply from hostility. No; the country unwillingly consented to these sacrifices, because it was assured with iteration and reiteration, because it was importuned and deafened by the pledges of Mr Gladstone and others, that they were the certain and only certain means of reconciling Ireland. Thus the electors are committed to Mr Gladstone's Irish measures only so far as those measures may have been instrumental in tranquillising Irish discontent. In other words, they are not committed to them at all; but rather they have strong ground of complaint, and a score to settle with the authors of them, who, by specious representations, lured them to dangerous courses, and then disappointed them. Again, can the pitiful submission to Russia, or the disgraceful American treaty and tribute, be justly charged upon the people; or have the people not rather a just ground for indignation



on account of these things? Will the people father the unhappy Army Regulation Act and its consequences; or accept, as Mr Bright would have them, the responsibility for the lavish expenditure which is being incurred? Our belief is, that the people will hold itself guiltless of all and every of these ill-considered measures; and that, if it participated so far that it is debarred from denouncing the acts themselves, it is nevertheless free—nay, it is bound—to provide against further misguidance, by displacing the men who have so practised on its credulity. That this result may be expected we may fairly presume from the leaning shown by the people at accidental elections since the career of the Government commenced, from the favour shown to Conservative statesmen generally, and especially from the enthusiastic receptions given from time to time to the Conservative leader.

Perhaps, however, what Ministers failed to do may prove to have damaged them in the opinion of the nation as much as their so-called successes. We allude to the Irish University Bill of 1873, concerning which we greatly rejoiced to read, last month, a daily contemporary which congratulated the country on the happy escape which it made from a law which would, in Ireland, have delivered over science to the mercy of the Roman Catholic priesthood. It said, moreover, that the priests might have had all that they contend for, or desire, through Mr Gladstone's Bill, if only they had been content to make two steps instead of one to attain it; for, as Mr Chichester-Fortescue confessed, the Bill was so framed as entirely to give them their will. We said the

same things\* seven or eight months ago; but we are glad, after this long lapse of time, to find our opinion strengthened by the writing of a powerful contemporary. Now, but for Mr Fortescue's revelation when the Bill was *in extremis*, nothing would have been said about this intention to play into the hands of the Roman Catholic hierarchy: the House of Commons was asked to pass the measure without being told what its operation was sure to be. If the House had been told, there would not have been a chance of its accepting the Bill. This was then a covert attempt to induce the Legislature to pass a law for making the priests of Rome paramount in the matter of education, while it was represented to be a proposal of quite another character. We need not, writing to Britons, use the epithets which would properly describe conduct such as this. We only hope that our contemporary's article † has been universally read and laid to heart; and that the whole island not only rejoices, as it is exhorted to do, in the escape which it has made, but records an irrevocable determination that the men who set this pitfall before the Parliament shall never have the opportunity of laying another such snare.

The apologists who are so tolerant of the little natural jobs and mischances, have not failed to seek for some good in the evils which they cannot deny. We are desired to consider what a thorn America would have been in our side, now that we have gone to war in Africa, if we had not satisfied her demands last year. But they who suggest this reflection appear to forget, or never to have perceived, the truth,

\* *Vide* 'Blackwood's Magazine' for April 1873, Art., "The Late Attempt at Suicide;" and June 1873, Art., "The Second Gladstone Administration."

† *Vide* a leading article of the 'Times' of 6th December 1873.

that no Ministers but such as were capable of grovelling before Russia and America would ever have thought of making this unfortunate war. Statesmen equal to the maintenance of the honour of England in *these* countries would not have descended to the miserable war in that. To rush unadvisedly and unnecessarily into such a war, the issue of which can hardly be doubtful, is perfectly compatible with poltroonery towards nations which can match us. To have heard the tenderness expressed, only eighteen months ago, for the negro race must have convinced those who knew not the speakers that violence towards the blacks was impossible in this generation. But our humane rulers are not only attacking them,—they are inciting and teaching the tribes to slaughter each other, and furnishing them with the means of exterminating each other more effectually. In the wars of last century in Canada, the worst feature was thought to be the method of using the savage red men on either side in the strife; and the horrors of Indian warfare were so great that both English and French at last agreed to dispense with the savages. This was very well a hundred years ago; but your philanthropists of the present day are not deterred by silly scruples. Burn, slay, trample,—that is the way to treat black people when it suits Liberal convenience so to do. By the by, would it not be well if some really Liberal member would once more bring the wrongs of poor Eyre before Parliament? Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright, red-handed as they stand—up to the knees in negro gore—could hardly with the old stereotyped cant dare again to condemn him. Anything that he did must look trivial and moderate beside the slaughter accomplished and projected of GLADSTONE'S BLACK WAR.

Their majesties the King of Winnebah, the King of Gormah, the King of Abra, the King of Akim, the King of Crepee, the King of Aquapim, the King of Acera, the King of Animaboe, the King of Dunkerah, the Queen of Great Britain!!! and one knows not how many more sovereigns, have associated themselves for the purpose of punishing Koffi, the sovereign of Ashanti, his confederates and tributaries. The terms of the league against Ashanti, as at first propounded, were that the fighting was all or principally to be done by the natives of Africa, while the white men were to be bottle-holders, or something of the sort. But this position it has been found necessary to abandon, and Britain has to throw herself into the contest in good earnest. White regiments are on their way to the pestilential coast, and, in the end, England is likely to furnish a larger quota of fighting men than any of the other Powers. Truly, the beginning of strife is like the letting out of waters. We cannot say now to what extent it may be necessary that we should be engaged. But this we can say, that the strife, whatever the effort that we may be called upon to make, has been entered upon, so far as this country is concerned, by Ministers who profess to detest war, and to be the friends of black men. This, we trust, will be remembered when the electors are next called on to exercise their privilege. There are strong grounds for supposing that British interests did not require this frightful war at all. To what extent Ministers have been culpable in regard to it we shall no doubt learn hereafter. It is not, however, too much to say that it seems extremely probable that means less damaging to reputation than we have resorted to on other well-



known occasions might have sufficed to avert the contest. We have swallowed a camel once or twice very meekly and readily, and one does not see why we could not have got down the gnat as well. King Koffi might or might not have observed any engagement that he might have made with us; but suppose he made engagements, and broke them, as it has been assumed that he certainly would, we should at the least have gained time to make observations, levy black troops, accumulate stores, and strengthen our frontier, so that the war, if found to be inevitable, might have been begun with every advantage on our side. The question, whether this sad affair has or has not been rashly or unnecessarily engaged in, will be one of the principal, if not the chief business of Parliament next month. Be it just or unjust, we must hope now for a successful termination of it at no distant date. That we can conquer there need not be the smallest doubt, and that we shall conquer is next to certain. Then Mr Gladstone, who knows so well how to make flourishes out of very tame events, may make more marquesses, and trumpet his brilliant successes in many ways. He may follow the precedent of 1814, and assemble the allied sovereigns in London; and he may have the whole thing done into a particular ballad, with his picture on the top of it, Koffi kissing his feet.

Indeed, encouragement of some kind is greatly needed for our gifted Premier; for what with the disasters and jobs of last session, the outraged peace party, the disaffected Nonconformists, the unmanageable Papists, the Black War, and the certainty of an ugly budget, he must be weighed down enough. That something does sit heavy on his soul is manifest by an infallible

token — he has been holding his tongue for some months. This depression, we are persuaded, is to be explained in the same way as the eccentric shuffling of the Ministers, and the digging up of Mr Bright. The Cabinet is riven, and as sheep without a shepherd — perhaps rebellious; and although its chief has been discussing Evolution, it is plain that in act he has been involving matters very intricately. We do not in the least hold with those who imagine a physical cause for the sudden pause in the chattering. Spiders, say some wise people, come into the world with a certain quantity of thread for spinning allotted to each. Any careful and economical spider will find that he can make as many webs as are required in an average life; but there be spiders so mad for weaving, so inordinately devoted to forming traps and mazes, that they exhaust their material before they are much past middle age. Now supposing that our powers of utterance are measured out to us as the webbing to the spider, one can understand how a person that has spun away so prodigally and recklessly as Mr Gladstone, elaborating enigmas, circumlocutions, paradoxes, as well as dealing out orations about everything and anything, may have at last exhausted his material, and become like the spendthrift spider. But the bankrupt spinner does not necessarily die for want of plant: he can weave no more for himself, but he can get a web for all that: he can prowl about until he finds a fellow creature smaller than himself, who has just set himself up in business, and surrounded himself with a snug tissue combining all the latest improvements. Him he incontinently disestablishes and turns loose upon the world (if he does not kill him), and takes pos-

session of his nets and habitation. Of course, if the analogy be pursued, we have to suppose Mr Gladstone putting up Mr Bright or Mr Lowe whenever it may be desirable to amuse, or perplex, or mislead the flies on whom they practise. But, as we were saying, we think this a far-fetched explanation. Mr Gladstone has not spun himself out, as will be seen whenever he may find himself in condition to take to the stump again; he is dumb just now, we conceive, because the evidences that he is a failure, always tardily admitted to a mind like his, are just beginning to impress him. Perhaps the whole miserable prospect of loss of offices and displacement from the leadership of his party may be opening upon him; if so, who can wonder at his tongue being a little paralysed!

In little more than a month the Ministry will have to meet Parliament under circumstances which they must feel to be adverse. Of the many sections of which their so-called party was made up, several are so disaffected that it is impossible to say how far they may be counted upon. Papists, Dissenters, Peace-at-any-price men, and Economists, all have their grievances, which they are likely to utter with trumpet tongues. What the Papist grievance may exactly be is not very clearly revealed to us. The Ultramontanes have had a Church disestablished and despoiled for their delectation, and Irish landlords have been ruthlessly plundered by an iniquitous law; yet still the cry of Rome is, Give, give, and the attitude of Rome, hopeless of obtaining all she wants, is menacing. The Non-conformists, soothed for a moment by the resurrection of Mr Bright, seem, now that they find themselves to have been only amused, to mean very serious mischief. One might fancy that they, too, had had pretty

marked favour shown to them at the expense of the common weal, but one never knows on what usurious terms such votes are acquired. At first the bargain seems to be altogether in favour of the party which receives the votes, but by-and-by we see the *per contra*, and find how unscrupulous and exacting the creditors become as the bills fall due. The Peace party, too, might be a little more patient, for they have had the gratification once or twice of seeing England dragged through the dirt; but they seem to consider that they have purchased an absolute right to keep her always in the mud, and will stand nothing in the way of a brush, however safe it may look. The Economists do really appear to have ground of complaint, for they have been simply bamboozled. No attempt has been made to meet their wishes. The Ministry, once safe in office, coolly went on piling up estimates without the smallest regard to their own severe reflections on excessive expenditure: and indeed this economical section, though the most patient, has been the worst used of all the malcontents. Thus the sins of Ministers have found them out; the pleasant stage of sailing before the wind, aided and cheered, is long past. In shallows and in miseries their voyage now is bound. There is everything to fear from their alienated sections, and the action of some of the constituencies since Parliament rose has sensibly diminished the ministerial majority, even if the sections could be induced to act together. If one-tenth of the self-laudation of Ministers had been justifiable, their present unpopularity could not be what it is.

The Reform Act of 1867, passed by a Conservative Government, was, till lately, a standing subject of sarcasm with the Liberals. For the sake, said they, of being able to



pass a measure of any importance at all, these demented Tories have secured their own extinction. They have enfranchised by thousands a class of the community (going many degrees further than we should ever have gone) which cannot possibly, in act or even in thought, favour Conservative doctrines. Like voyagers who drift in a storm-broken ship they have chosen to plunge at once into the deep rather than face the vicissitudes of hope and fear, and the certain miseries which at the best could have procured them but a bare and helpless existence. And, indeed, the results of the general elections of 1868 did seem to superficial observers to justify the taunts. To superficial observers, we say, for even in 1868, in the full tide of the Liberal triumph, there were signs plain enough to those who could see below the surface that the revolutionary feeling, although sufficiently prevalent to send up from the three kingdoms together a large majority of Radical members, was counteracted, if not counterbalanced, by a remarkably strong and general Conservative feeling among those recently enfranchised. Conservatism was not then in the ascendant, but it was alive and active; and the Conservative working man, even while he was furnishing his opponents with delicious jokes and sneers, was already a power in the State, soon to make himself effectual to the pulling down of air-built castles. England, regarded by herself, was Conservative even at the time of the election: it was the returns from Scotland and Ireland which secured the Radical majority. That great centre of industry, Lancashire, gave no uncertain sound as to her Conservative leanings; but in the great towns of the kingdom where Conservatives did not form a majority, they mustered in such numbers as

should have impressed people not wilfully blind, and they lost by wonderfully small majorities.

The opinions expressed by some shrewd commentators in 1869 are shown by subsequent electoral events to have been prophetic. For, as chance vacancies have since occurred in the House of Commons, the disposition of constituencies to return Conservative members has been abundantly demonstrated. If at a general election the Radicals should lose the same proportion of seats as they have lost by casual elections since 1869, the Union Steam-Ship Company would have to deplore the loss of some attached friends, and profitable customers, without a hope of regaining them in this world. It is not only that the Government party has been certainly losing seats for four years, but that the proportion of their losses has been steadily increasing the longer they hold office, the year just past having witnessed more and greater miscarriages than any of the three years preceding. Events since the general election have undoubtedly tended to justify to a Conservative view the Act of 1867; and the Ballot, that palladium of independent Liberals, has in no way arrested or diverted the current of opinion. It may puzzle Mr Gladstone and other pundits to understand how, after all that they have said, and proved, and promised, and failed to do, there *can* be such a being as the Conservative working man; but that there is such a being, and to their cost, they probably are beginning to confess.

Assemblages of working men, all anxious to mark their detestation of Radical practices, are not uncommon, if one may trust the accounts of the daily press. There was a rather crowded one at Manchester in 1872, about which we had something to say; and, in November

last, as everybody knows, there was a muster at Glasgow which might well send a chill into Liberal breasts and cheer Conservative spirits in north and south Britain. The University of Glasgow thought fit to elect Mr Disraeli its lord-rector: the city of Glasgow invited the right hon. gentleman to visit it, and receive its hospitality; and the working men of Glasgow entreated him, while he was among them, to gratify them by making them an address. The speech which he made in answer to this last request has been read by everybody in the kingdom who did not hear it. We need not here quote from its clever passages, nor comment on the hints which it contained, the Ministerial shortcomings which it exposed, or the prospects of better government which it held out. The public was long ago made to understand all the points of the oration. But what no written account can convey, what no one who was not present can conceive, is the generous, the enthusiastic reception which awaited his suggestions, his descriptions, his satire, argument, and wit, in that countless audience. To be amused is one thing, to run after and admire talent another; but the feeling which responded to Mr Disraeli's words was perfect sympathy with all his sentiments and all his moods. Very seldom has a man—an eminent and gifted man even—been gratified by such a demonstration of respectful consent with what fell from his lips. There is small likelihood that the enthusiasm which found expression on the banks of Clyde does not burn as generously in many a county and city throughout the Land o' Cakes. And mark! Mr Disraeli did not win this homage, did not excite this rapturous concurrence of sentiment, by making exorbitant promises, or by setting forth the incalculable benefits that would be derived from

exalting him to power and commissioning him to sway the destinies of the Empire. He did not denounce the institutions of his country, did not pretend to prove to working men how much they might gain by certain startling changes which he was prepared to effect, did not bid against the Radicals trick for trick, did not indeed promise anything; and yet his success was such as the most glozing Liberal would have thought unexampled after unlimited pledges and illuminated pictures. If this was a bid for office, it was such a bid as no statesman, no gentleman, no Englishman need be ashamed of. It was such a bid as will bring the speaker to power—if he come at all to power—untrammelled in all respects, and at full liberty to act in any way that may seem expedient for the country's good. Of course there always is a pledge in such cases, implied if not expressed; and what Mr Disraeli pledged himself to, and what the men of Glasgow unhesitatingly accepted, was that his patriotism, his unflagging zeal, his highest endeavour to act in all circumstances and in all respects as may seem best for the nation at large, shall be always at command. "No programme still," say the Radicals, with exultation. No; no programme, we reply, with equal satisfaction. No painted canvas over the caravan; no boasting; no trumpeting; no Barnum-work at all. There has been enow, one would think, of touting business, and it has not left pleasant memories to any of the parties concerned. What would the sinking Ministry give now if some Moeris could turn the waters of Lethe over their promises, and pledges, and professions? What are the millstones which hang about Mr Gladstone's and Mr Bright's necks, and are bowing them, month by month, towards the dust?



Promises, bright glowing promises, which cannot be redeemed. Perhaps it may be objected that promises which could secure a tenure of office for five years were useful, whether they were kept or not. No doubt; but we think we know of statesmen who would not care for five years of office procured in that way. Office, if that had been the only desire of Mr Disraeli and his party, might have been obtained in 1873. But to thoroughly impress the country with the insufficiency of the pretenders of 1868 is a greater object than to snatch at immediate power. The nominal lead may meanwhile be safely left to Mr Gladstone and his Cabinet. The Ministry is powerless for active mischief; and, like a horse trussed in the system of thongs and springs called a dumb-jockey, is checked in every movement. Confronted in the House of Commons by incomparably the largest party in the kingdom, and threatened continually by one or another of its own sections, it dares originate no policy at all. There is one way, and only one, out of this thralldom; but that way it dares not take. The voices that are wafted from Glasgow, and from a hundred other centres of industry, show them only too plainly what will be the result of an appeal to the people. Let them, then, continue to oscillate between impatience at their helpless condition, and dread of meeting the electors: we can "work and wait." Let them go on jobbing, playing at puss-in-the-corner, puffing their acted period, inventing astounding rumours of what they yet may do; they can but, in one way or another, exhibit their own incapacity—only make the catastrophe, when it does come, more crushing. Long ago we wrote that the only thing wanting to their utter discomfiture was that the people should

have time to study them and know them: the more they look at them, the less they will like them. The risk of their being able, by some dexterous expedient, to draw opinion once more to themselves, we are content to run. If they can by any means persuade their countrymen that it is desirable to retain them in office, by all means let them do so; it will be a proof that the illusions of 1868 have not yet been quite seen through and universally condemned, and that we must wait yet a little longer for the return of right judgment. But the signs of the times tend to show that the illusions *are* dispelled, else what does the Glasgow assemblage mean, and what mean the recent elections at Exeter and Hull, and the many other preceding Conservative successes which, from time to time, we have had to note?

But now to turn for a moment from the popular feeling at Glasgow to Mr Disraeli himself, the object of all that enthusiasm. We most heartily rejoice at the voluntary homage, the well-timed recognition, that his services have received. For, though he has proved to us that sunshine is not necessary to his keeping in working condition, and doing valuable work, yet there are few who do not work all the better for a little encouragement. A large portion of our people, it is evident, have conceived a high opinion of Mr Disraeli, and manifested a desire to employ him in their affairs. Now, if they should see fit to call him to power, it would certainly be better for both parties—that is, for the State and for the Minister—that the latter should accede to office with that charter for free action which only a sense of the people's regard, and the people's confidence, can give. If we are to have him at all, let us not have him chained and weighted, but in a

condition to give us the benefit of all the good that may be in him. Our people are wont in many cases to admire qualities even more than they do opinions; and of all qualities, constancy, especially constancy through evil report, has been their favourite. They like the sort of man who doesn't know when he ought to consider himself beaten, and who turns up in the arena fresh, confident, and full of fight, while the quid-nuncs are quarrelling as to whether he is mortally wounded or only for the town's end during life. And Mr Disraeli, we know, stuck to his colours, doggedly patient, always ready for the uphill fight, when fainter hearts hung back and disowned the losing cause; and certain mercenary natures, like Demas, forsook us, "having loved this present world."

It is certain, too, that the right honourable gentleman's education as a leader has been of the severest. He has had to keep his troops in hand, and to preserve his influence while leading them through a protracted and wearying series of struggles against adverse fortune. It is comparatively easy to keep the lead when all is going smoothly and fortunately (though some commanders find their way to grief even in those circumstances); but the real trial of the chief takes place when fortune frowns; when success is so far off that it is hard to believe that it ever will come; when reproach and contumely are the only rewards; when the temptations to desert or to rebel are strong and manifold. No one has heard him give way to impatience; no one has ever heard him despair of his cause. When the reverse of 1868 came unexpectedly upon him, he behaved with perfect composure, and showed that he then saw the rocks on which his opponents would be wrecked, and that he was content to wait until

they had floundered on to them. Since that day he has shown no disposition to rail at his fate, to press unfairly upon his adversaries, or to grasp at power.

If Mr Disraeli should be called to office, he will have been chosen by the calm, deliberate judgment of the country. This is a kind of selection which Radicals cannot aspire to, never hope for. It is quite a matter of course that when about to bid for office they first endeavour to lash the nation into a foam, so that in a maze of delusion, excitement, and headlong wilfulness, it may blindly carry them to power. But Mr Disraeli is as guiltless of practising on popular sentiment as of dealing out unmeasured promises. The people are calling to him; he is not plastering himself with advertisements and importuning them to accept him. Ready for his work he told his Sovereign that he is; but he can wait until his services are called for. Whenever that time may come, he will, we need not doubt, use his great talents for the general advantage, as he understands that expression. He does not conceive the whole duty of a Cabinet to consist in undermining the constitution, and shearing away its bulwarks. On the other hand, there is not the least danger of his allowing the country to stagnate. He does wisely to conceal what his plans may be until he shall have the power of executing them.

With a Conservative Government in power, the country will have the advantage of a Ministerial party anxious to support the Cabinet for the general good; not an aggregation of conflicting sections, each eager to force its own small crotchet into prominence, and more formidable to the Ministry than the Opposition itself. It will not be necessary to scatter about sops and promises and rumours: to set up



one Minister as a signal to the Dissenters, to overturn another as a caution to the Papists, or to stop with office the mouths of restless and disaffected followers. It is nonsense, as every one must now perceive, to think of limiting the expenditure of this great and widely connected country to any particular figure; but it is just possible that the real efficiency, with economy, may be Mr Disraeli's work. What can be done to recover Ireland from the terrible condition into which it has been brought by ill-advised legislation is not so easy to predict. That the Ultramontane party will be as troublesome as it can, and will discountenance every measure calculated to really benefit Ireland, we may feel certain; and the question is, how far Englishmen can be brought to agree in absolutely opposing this foreign influence, and in dealing with their fellow-subjects in Ireland independently of the priests. From some opinions which we have seen in print, it seems probable that a large section of Liberals may agree in determinedly repudiating sympathy with Home Rule. The disestablishment of the Irish Church and the passing of the Irish Land Act will, we are informed, enable many Liberals to oppose Home Rule with clear consciences. Our opinion is that, but for the two measures just named, there would have been no Home Rule question to oppose; but, putting that argument aside for the moment, we are exceedingly glad to hear that, at any rate, Home Rule is not likely to be extensively adopted as a Liberal cry. Unquestionably Ireland will try the governing ability of any party that may be in power; but then we know that the Radical treatment has only made her worse, so it seems reasonable that the Conservatives should try their hand.

They will not boast before they apply their remedies; but they are not the more likely to fail on that account.

A successful foreign policy will be perhaps the most difficult result of all for a new Government to achieve. Now that the nations have been taught to believe that England will yield anything to the persistent bullying of a strong power—to uphold her honour without involving her in war, will require cautious and discriminating statesmanship. Through our disgraceful submission to Russian dictation, we are ill at ease concerning our Indian Empire. We have deserted or put away the friends and allies who might have aided or might yet aid us in securing our frontier. We have shown our fear of America, and not acquired her goodwill. The ubiquity of our possessions renders us more liable than other nations to injury or attack, and yet we have been studiously separating ourselves from other states, and alienating even our own colonies. It is true that we have the silver streak, but will that reduce Koffi or the Kaffir chiefs, or cover the great outworks of our Empire? While our Ministers have been weakening us day by day, enormous armies, as Lord Derby lately showed, have been raised in the States of Europe, and these, we may presume, are not kept up only to be looked at. It is plain, therefore, that an incoming Ministry will have to address itself at once to a rectification of the blunders made at the War Office and Admiralty.

Before concluding, let us remark that many people will think the nation indebted to Mr Disraeli for the boldness with which he refused to acknowledge Conservatism as the creed of a particular class. It might have served his immediate purpose to throw himself upon the working

men, and to offer to march to power at their head. But he was above this artifice. Conservatism invites, and, as he thinks, deserves, the adhesion of all classes, high and low, for the common good. The horizontal division of the people into political parties is deprecated by every true patriot; and, proud as we are of the support of the working man, and anxiously as we desire to retain his good opinion, we must beg him in his political character not to think too exclusively of class, but to be content to rub shoulders with peers and commoners of all grades. No class in this country can prosper except it be in close relationship to other classes. Mr Disraeli rightly demonstrated that it is his mission to counteract the insidious attempts which have been made to create class antagonism. Those who gain an immediate end by fomenting class animosities cannot possibly wish to see their own theories carried into act; and those who put the public interest before that of party will be most careful not to pervert the regard of the men who do the handiwork of this busy community.

On the whole, then, we incline to the opinion that the political aspect at the opening of this 1874 is much in accordance with the wishes and endeavours of the Conservative party. There is strong evidence that the present Govern-

ment has much fallen in public estimation, and that it is gradually but certainly still going down. Although a great daily authority assures us every time a Conservative is sent to Parliament that the event was inevitable for certain obvious philosophical reasons, that it is no index whatever of political feeling, and that, indeed, it is rather an accident on which to congratulate the Liberals—spite of these heavy dicta, we venture to say that the Ministry will see a gathering on the benches opposite them, such as may well cause their hearts to sink. We are not contemplating any sudden victory, nor even desiring it. The experience of every day convinces us more and more that our cause is best served for the present, by letting official things remain as they are, and showing to the country more and more plainly what all the talents and all the virtues really mean. Continual descent must, save in one locality not now in question, find the bottom at last; and perhaps it might be a safe wager, that in less time than it would take our recent and valuable acquisition, the Dromedary, to steam round the world, the virtue and talent to which we stand indebted for her may have lost the control of Government contracts, and may be occupied in the preparation of a new prospectus.



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THE STORY OF VALENTINE ;

AND HIS BROTHER.

PART II.—CHAPTER IV.

LORD ESKSIDE was a homely representative of Scotch aristocracy. He was as proud as Lucifer in his own way, but that way was quaint and unsuspected by strangers ; and his outward appearance and manners, and the principles he professed, were even humorously homely and almost democratical. Pretension of any kind moved him to an exaggeration of this natural homeliness ; though when his dignity was really touched nobody could be more decided in his treatment of the vulgar, whom on ordinary occasions he seemed to incline towards, and to whom, so long as they made no fictitious claims to importance, he was whimsically friendly and indulgent. He had many other paradoxical sentiments about him. Being a high Tory by tradition and born belief, it happened to him now and then to take up a trenchant Radical theory, which he clung to with the obstinacy of his race, and would carry out in the most uncompro-

missing manner. He was keenly intelligent when he chose ; but when he did not choose, no lout in the village could be more thickheaded than the old lord, nor show greater need to have everything “summered and wintered” to him, as Lady Eskside often impatiently said. He had strong feelings, but they lay very deep, and were seldom exhibited to the common eye, his own consciousness of their existence showing itself chiefly in a hasty determination to avoid all means of moving them, which gave many ignorant persons the impression that our old lord was an ill-tempered man. He was impatient, I allow, and resented all long and slow explanations, except when it happened to be his caprice to put on the air of requiring them. He was a little man, with lively hazel eyes gleaming out from overhanging grizzled eyebrows, and many people were afraid of his sharp retorts and ruthless questions ; not a man with whom,

you may be sure, sentimental considerations would weigh much—or at least who would permit it to be seen how much they weighed.

He was very much startled when he heard what had happened—so much startled that he received the tale in comparative silence, half stupefied by the strange incident; and allowed himself to be led by his wife to the side of the bed where the child slept profoundly, almost without a word of remark. He stood and gazed at it, his keen eyes twinkling from beneath their heavy eyebrows, and his under lip working, as it habitually did when he was moved by any feeling which he did not choose to show. But he uttered nothing more than an unintelligible “humph!” and instead of sympathising with Lady Eskside’s excitement, her tearful enthusiasm, and the tumult of agitation in which she was, turned away almost without response, and went off to his study, where he had been painfully busy with calculations and cogitations over the ‘*Journal of Agriculture*’; for he was a great farmer, and just then deeply occupied with the question of manures, a study of thrilling and delicate interest. He tried to resume these studies, but for this his philosophy did not suffice. He sat down, however, by his table as before, and, with his periodical open before him—working his under lip, which projected slightly, and bending his brows—gave his mind to this new problem, which was more astounding than anything in agriculture. After a while he rose and rang the bell. It was answered by Harding, the English butler, who had been in Lord Eskside’s service for thirty years, and knew all about the family as an old servant knows—that is, rather more than there is to know. The fact, however, that Harding was English, gave a certain

peculiarity to the connection between himself and his old master, who was equally ready to hold him up to admiration as “a good solid Englishman, not troubling himself about whimsies,” or to denounce him as “a doited English body, never understanding the one-half of what you said to him.” Lord Eskside had a mingled trust in Harding and contempt for him, which I do not think he could have entertained for a countryman of his own.

“Harding,” he said, “come in and shut the door. I suppose you know all that’s happened in the house to-night. You should have called me. Haven’t I always told you to call me when anything out of the way occurred?”

“My lord,” said Harding, not without agitation, “there has never nothing happened much out of the way before. When I did call your lordship the night of the fire in the laundry, your lordship said I was a doited old fool—and how was I to know——?”

“That will do,” said Lord Eskside; “you needn’t recriminate. The thing I want to know is about this child. How did it come? who brought it? My lady has told me something, but I want your account. Now take your time, and begin at the beginning. — Who brought the boy here?”

“My lord, if I were to die this moment,” Harding began——

“Idiot! what would you die for this moment?” cried the old lord; “and if you did die, what information would I get from that? Begin at the beginning, I tell you: what happened? none of your adjurations. What do you *know*?”

“If your lordship will let me speak,” said Harding, aggrieved. “I don’t know from Adam who brought him. It was close upon dark, and the storm raging. I thought it was nothing but the wind



that swept in, and a blast of rain that came full in my face. There hasn't been such a wind that I recollect since the year Mr Richard went first to college—when there was a awful storm, as your lordship may remember'——"

"Never mind the storm," said Lord Eskside, with an effort of patience, "think a little.—When did this occur? Fix upon the hour. Now—that's something definite. We'll get on from that."

"That there can be no doubt about, my lord," said Harding, promptly. "The bell was ringing for the servants' hall supper—which made it a little hard at first to hear the door-bell. We has our supper sharp at nine ——"

("Trust him to mind his times of eating!" ejaculated Lord Eskside: "an Englishman never forgets that.")

"—— And just then the door-bell rang. Not expecting nobody, I was a little scared-like. I said to myself, 'Who's this a-coming at this time of the night?' and I called to Mrs 'Arding——"

"Lordsake, man, never mind your thoughts or your Mrs Harding! get on."

"I called to Mrs 'Arding, my lord," said the butler, solemnly, "to wait and see who it was afore they went into supper. It might have been visitors unexpected, as I've known to arrive all in an 'eap and never a room ready. It might have been Mr Richard, as is always particular. Beg your lordship's pardon, that was what passed through my 'ead. Then them as was outside rang again. I'm a bit confused with all that's appened. It was that loud that it sounded like the day of judgment——"

"There are to be no bells that ever I heard of at the day of judgment," said his master; "leave metaphors, man, and give me facts—that's all I want."

"Then they got to knocking on the door, my lord—not using the knocker like people as knows. I ain't superstitious, though I've heard tales enough to make your hair stand up on your head since I've been in the north—warnings and that sort. But I did say to myself, if so be it's for his lordship or my lady—spirits being in the family, so to speak—— Was it something else your lordship was pleased to want?"

"Send for your wife," growled Lord Eskside, who had rung the bell violently, and now stood impatient on the hearth with his back to the fire, working his projecting lip and shaggy eyebrows. This was so very common an interruption of the more important interviews between master and man, that Mrs Harding came without further call, not sorry of the opportunity of getting rid of a little of her own excitement, and very anxious to know, in a matter of so much moment, "what my lord would say."

"Look here," said her master. "What did he see? Not a word can I get out of him but havers. What did the man see? I suppose you were there too, like all the rest of the house—like everybody, in short, except myself. What did he see?"

"He saw naething, my lord, that I can make out," said the house-keeper; "just the door dung open in his face with the wind and a good push from the outside. It's been a wild night, and the sounds of the storm were awfu' confusing even to the like of me. So far as I can discover, there was just something thrown inside, and a blast of weat, and the big door snatched out of his hand and clashed to, and all in a moment before he could say a word. That's a' that I can make out. I was in the servant's passage myself listening and wondering, and a' in a tremble with the

thoughts of visitors or waur. He didna say a word but gaed a kind of skreigh, and I kent something had happened. When I ran into the hall, and a' the women after me—for ye ken the story of the Eskside warning, my lord, as well as me—there was the wean standing up in the corner against the wa', and him there glow'ring at it, as if the bonnie bit laddie was a ghaist."

"And that's all?"

"That's all, my lord, as far as I can find out—he says he saw a figure, but what kind of a figure——"

"It was a woman wrapped in a cloak," said Harding, somewhat sullenly—"I was coming to that; a tall figure of a woman, not like nobody I know—a sort of a beggar—a tramp."

"Would you know her again, if you saw her?" asked Lord Eskside.

"As for that, my lord—I see as she had black hair hanging down, and something red twisted round her neck,—a roughish sort of a woman. She caught hold of the door and shut it in my face," said Harding, roused to energy, "though she was the one as was outside and me in——"

"And said nothing—you are sure she said nothing?"

"Not a word, my lord. I called out to her, Hollo! 'old 'ard!" said Harding; "but she didn't pay no attention. She took hold of the door, and dragged it out of my hand. It's true as I was taken by surprise and didn't put out my strength."

"A muckle strong randy of a woman," said Mrs Harding. "I think I maun have seen her the other day down by the lodge, with a bairn tied on her back in a shawl:" then suddenly perceiving her mistake, she added, "no that such a quean could have anything to do with—with our wee gentleman, if my lady's right; and she's a yer right,"

the housekeeper continued, in a lower tone, with keen eyes fixed on the old lord. Mrs Harding knew her master and mistress, and flattered herself that she had no small influence with them; but part of her power, like that of many other popular oracles, consisted in her vivid perception of the variations in the minds of her employers, whom she often seemed to lead by means of prompt and instantaneous following. She was herself very much excited, very doubtful and uncertain about this strange event; and she watched her master with a sharpness of observation which proved the urgency of the case. As for Lord Eskside, he stood knitting his brow, and forgetting, or at least ignoring, the pair who stood, one sharply, and one dully, attentive, awaiting his next observation. When he spoke, his utterance was sharp and sudden—the abrupt issue of a long deliberation.

"Have you any reason to suppose that this—person—this woman—has been haunting the place? You say you saw her down at the lodge?"

"I saw a—beggar-wife," said the housekeeper, subdued; "but on second thoughts, my lord——"

"D——second thoughts!" cried her master, impatiently; then turning to her husband,—"and you, Harding, had you ever seen her before?"

Harding paused; he balanced himself first on one leg and then on the other; he scratched his puzzled head, fixing his old master with his eyes, in the hope that this precaution would guard him against an outburst. "Seen her before, your lordship?" Harding said, finally, with caution; "I've seen—a many like her——"

"Fool! can't you answer a plain question?" cried his master, furious. "Had you seen *her* before? could you recognise *her* again?"

"My lord, I'm no wanting to



interfere out of a woman's sphere," said the housekeeper. "You ken better than me, both your lordship and *him*; but if you'll just consider—— He saw her one moment, nae mair. He was sair taken by surprise; it was dark, and the wind blowing wild, and the rain in his face. You should see the hall a' weet where it came in—and just one moment, my lord! If it had been myself he would scarce have kent me. And his een are no so shairp as they once were, your lordship well knows."

"Oh ay, Marg'ret, I know; you take his part whatever happens——"

"And wha but me should take his part, when he's my man?" said the housekeeper, triumphantly. As soon as she had brought that reluctant impatient smile momentarily to her master's face, she was safe, she knew. Lord Eskside stood lost in his own thoughts for some time before he dismissed them, forgetting their existence, though to them he was the centre of the earth, and could not be forgotten. When at last, coming to himself abruptly, he waved his hand and muttered something about the night being too far spent for further action, the pair left the room with very different sentiments. Harding, who had not yet recovered the discomfort of his watch in the wet avenue, was too thankful to be spared further trouble to disturb himself with any questions; but his wife, more interested, partly from her deeper concern in all that affected the family, and partly, perhaps, from mere feminine preoccupation with the mystery, was by no means satisfied. "Is my lady right?" she kept saying to herself; and put the evidence together with that strange ability and clear-headedness which family servants, whose entire intelligence is absorbed in the facts of a family history, so often show. My lady was general-

ly right—at least her opinions were generally approved and adopted by the household, which comes to much the same thing; but there was a huge gulf of doubt before her, which Mrs Harding contemplated with a disquieted mind. How could this beggar's brat be the heir of Eskside? He was like the Rosses; he was called by their favourite name—"a daftlike name, no doubt, and out of the common," the housekeeper acknowledged to herself; but yet the difficulties overbalanced the probabilities in the judgment of this keen though homely observer. She drove her husband nearly frantic by dwelling upon the subject all the night long. "It ain't none of our business," said Harding; "trust my lord and my lady to mind theirselves; it ain't got nothing to say to us." He was very glad to get rid of so troublesome a question, and to mind his work, as he said; for a better servant, as both his master and mistress often declared, was not to be found in Scotland. His wife had her faults; but she lay awake half the night pondering this strange incident while he slept the sleep of the just, unburdened by any anxieties. But he was more exact than she was (with her disturbed mind) about the comfort of the household next morning. On the whole, it is difficult to say which kind of service is the best.

Lord Eskside remained for some time longer in his study, and then he went up-stairs to the drawing-room, to join the ladies. Lady Eskside, however, was not to be found there, and a certain look of agitation was over the place of which she was the natural soul. She had gone up to "the nursery,"—long-disused and unaccustomed words!—to sit by the child's bedside, and brood over his slumbers. Mary Percival was sitting by the fire alone, with a book upon her lap, which she did

not even pretend to read. The fire was low, the lamp was low, the room was less bright than usual, and everything told of some occurrence which had broken up the ordinary calm. Mary put her book aside and took up some knitting which lay on the table, when the old lord entered and took his position on the hearth-rug, with his back to the fire as usual ; but her knitting was a mere pretence, as her reading had been—the pretence of a pretence, for she only held it vaguely in her hand. For some little time nothing was said except a few commonplaces consequent on Lord Eskside's curt impatient remarks. How bad the lights were ! it was the lamp that had run down, Mary said ; and went and screwed it up again, with a hand that trembled. Where was my lady ? — She had gone upstairs ; Mary did not know if she meant to come down again ; perhaps, having been a good deal shaken, she had gone to bed. Humph ! Lord Eskside said, working his under lip, and bending his shaggy brows. Mary felt pained and embarrassed, like a stranger involved in a family quarrel, and obliged to explain the conduct of one member of a household to another ; and she felt the silence almost intolerable as she sat down again, and took her knitting in her hand. At last the old lord rushed abruptly into the all-absorbing subject, as was his way.

"What do *you* think of all this, Mary ? You're a sensible girl. Is my lady out of her mind ? or what's to be done about this—child ?"

"Oh, Lord Eskside," said Mary, with tremulous agitation, "how could she be wrong on such a point ? It is Richard's child."

"How should she not be wrong ? how is any one to know ? a nameless brat, without sign or surety ; probably some gipsy's spawn or

other. Right ! It could be but a guess at the best."

"You did not see him," said Mary, faltering. "He is like—his father."

"Like his father !" cried Lord Eskside ; and he began to pace up and down the long, large, partially-lighted room, a moving atom in it, yet supreme in his disturbed and disturbing humanity ; "like his father !—very probably—but how can we tell who is his father ? I think my lady, poor soul, has gone out of her mind."

"But you have not seen him," said Mary, softly, not knowing what to say.

"I have seen the creature, a little dark toad. Dick was always fair and feeble like my mother's family, a fusionless being. We must write for him, and have his opinion. God bless me, Mary ! if they both hold to it, mother and son, and this founding grows up as heir to the property, how is he ever to establish his title ? We'll have Sandy Pringle down upon us with all the Scots law at his finger-ends—and what am I, a reasonable man, to do ?"

"Oh, Lord Eskside, that is a long way off," cried Mary, laying hold of the first argument that occurred to her.

"Things are none the easier for being a long way off," said the old lord ; and then he fell silent, pacing up and down the room, and finally returned to his place on the hearth-rug, where he stood pondering and waiting for his wife, whose hasty conclusions he so much objected to, yet whose presence and energy bore him up. Had she been there to argue with him, the strange thing that had occurred would have looked real. But in her absence what could Lord Eskside do but fret and fume ? Mary and her gentle arguments were unsubstantial to him as any of the other shadows that filled the silent and deserted room.



## CHAPTER V.

Richard Ross had not visited his parents for years. He had scarcely been at home at all since the miserable catastrophe which had so fatally enlightened the world as to the folly of his marriage ; and perhaps the certainty that he must come now contributed something to his mother's rapture in the recovery of his child : for the instinct of nature overcomes all its unlikeness ; and Richard, though a man whom she would have laughed at and scorned had he not been her son, was, being her son, dearer than all the world to Lady Eskside. The new event which had happened was important enough, and his mother's appeal was still more urgent and imperative ; but I doubt if it would be true to say that there was any excitement of feeling, any happiness of anticipation in Richard's mind as he travelled home in obedience to the call. Nearly seven years had elapsed since his children were taken from him, and they had been too young to leave any permanent impression on his mind. That they were his children was all that could be said ; and in Richard's mind, as time went on and he began to regard his misfortunes with a kind of hopeless apathy, they had come to be more like shadows of their mother than independent beings possessing rights and claims of their own. The first effect of the news was to rouse him to a painful sense of his own dismal shipwreck and hopeless failure in life, rather than to any excitement of a more tender kind. Those great personal misfortunes which change the complexion of our lives may fall into the background, they may cease to render us actively and always wretched ; but they lie in wait, keeping, as it were, ever within

reach, to wake into hot recollection at a touch. Most of us prefer to avoid that touch when we can, and Richard had done this more persistently and with greater success than most people ; but yet they lay there ready, the shame and the pain, wanting nothing but a jog to bring them out in full force. I would not go the length of saying that he was touched by no feeling of thankfulness that his child was restored ; but his pleasure was infinitely less than the suffering he went through by means of this revival of all that was most painful in his life. He had long outgrown the boyish passion which led to his strange marriage ; and as he had nothing to look back upon in connection with that marriage that was not miserable and humiliating, it is not wonderful that shame and self-disgust were his most lively sensations when it was recalled to him. He could not understand how he could have been guilty of folly so supreme and so intense ; how he could have bartered his credit, his comfort, all the better part of life, not to speak of that hot love of youth, which in calmer years often looks so much like folly, even when it is happy and fortunate — for what ? Nothing. He had not even, so far as he knew, touched the heart of the woman for whom he had made so extraordinary a sacrifice. At best she had but accepted and submitted to his love ; she had never loved him ; his influence had not wrought any change in her. He had not even affected her being so much as to induce her to give up the habits of her former life, or show any inclination to learn the habits of his. She had humiliated him in every way, and in no way so much as by allowing him to per-

ceive his own impotence in regard to herself. This gave the last sting of bitterness to his recollections. A man can bear the outward disagreeables which result from a foolish marriage ; he can put up, patiently or otherwise, with much that would revolt him in any other less close and binding connection ; but when, in addition to these, he is made to feel that he himself is nothing and less than nothing to the creature for whom he has made these sacrifices, it is inevitable, or almost inevitable, that the early infatuation should change into a very different feeling. Sometimes, it is true, the victim of passion, notwithstanding all enlightenment, continues in his subjection, and goes on adoring even when he despises ; but such cases are rare, and Richard's was not one of them. I cannot understand any more than his mother could, how "a son of hers" could have ever made so extraordinary a mistake in life ; but now that his existence was permanently ruined and devastated by this great blunder, Richard had felt that his best policy was to ignore it utterly. He had lived a celibate and blameless life during all those years of enforced widowhood. Society knew vaguely that he had been married, though most people thought him a widower ; but though much in the world, he had lived so as to avoid all disagreeable inquiries into the actual facts of the case. He had never betrayed even to his friends the blight which had stopped all progress in life for him. According to all precedent of fiction, some other woman ought to have stepped across his path and learned his secret, as Mr Thackeray's Laura does by George Warrington. But Richard Ross had indulged in no Laura. He had friends enough and to spare, but never any close enough or dear enough to warrant scandal. Instead of Platonic affections he had

taken to china, a safer weakness ; and it was to this tranquil gentleman in the midst of his collections that the mother's letter came, thrusting back upon his recollection the dismal and humiliating melodrama of which he had been the hero. It is not difficult to imagine in the circumstances with what bitter annoyance he bore this revival of all his miseries, and girded himself up to answer the summons, and for the first time appear at home.

He arrived on a spring night as mild as the former one I have described had been boisterous. The sun had just set, and the rosy clouds hung above the trees of Rosscraig, and over the hillside, just tinged here and there with the bursting of the spring buds, but still for the most part brown and leafless, which sloped to the brawling Esk. I do not know a fairer scene anywhere. Some old turrets of the older part of the house, belonging to that style of domestic architecture which is common to France and to Scotland, peeped forth above the lofty slope of the bank. Had winter been coming, the brown, unclothed trees might have conveyed an impression of sadness ; but as spring was coming they were all hopeful, specially where the green breaks of new foliage, big chestnut buds, and new green leaves still creased and folded, threw a wash of delicate colour upon the landscape. Richard's heart was somewhat touched by the feeling that he was approaching home ; but the more his heart was touched the less he was inclined to show it ; for had not he himself injured the perfection of that home, which was surrounded by people *who knew*, and who could not but comment and criticise ? He heaved an impatient sigh, even while his heart was melting to the dear familiar place, and wished himself away again among people who knew nothing about



him, even though he felt the many charms of home steal into his heart. He was a year or two over thirty—a young man, though he did not feel young—tall and fair, with a placid temper and the gentlest manners; a man to all appearance as free from passion and as prone to every virtuous and gentle affection as man could be. His aspect, indeed, was that of a very model of goodness and English domestic perfection—a man who would be the discreetest of guides to his household, the best of fathers, an example to all surrounding him. This was what he ought to have been. Had he married Mary Percival this is what he would have been; though I think it very likely that Mary would have wearied of him without knowing why, and found life—had she had him—a somewhat languid performance. But, unfortunately, she was quite unconscious of what would have happened had the might have been ever come to pass, and did not know that she missed some evil as well as some good. On the contrary, her heart beat far more than she would have wished it to beat when the roll of the carriage-wheels which conveyed Richard was heard in the avenue. She stole out by the conservatory-door to be out of the way, and hid herself in the woods which sloped downward to Eskside. She scarcely heard the brawl of Esk, so loud was her heart beating. Poor Mary! it was not Richard alone who had come back and had to be met with tranquilly, as one stranger meets another—but her youth and all her fancies, and those anticipations long past which were so different from the reality. Mary stayed under the budding trees till almost the last ray of daylight had faded, and the bell from the house, calling all stragglers, tinkled from the height among the evening echoes. This bell of itself was a sign that something had hap-

pened: Lord and Lady Eskside were homely in their ways, and it was never rung when they were alone.

Lady Eskside received her son with the child by her side, going forward to meet him with little Val clinging to her hand; but when she forgot Val and threw her arms round her own boy whom she had not seen for so long, the child, bewildered, shifted its grasp to her gown, which he held fast, somewhat appalled as well as jealous at the appearance of this new-comer. It was not until after Richard had received his father's less effusive greeting that even Lady Eskside bethought herself of the occasion of the visit—the little silent spectator, who, half buried in the folds of her gown, watched everything with keen eyes. "Ah!" she cried; then with a self-reproach for her own carelessness, "I think of my boy first, without minding that you are thinking of yours. Come, Val, and speak to your papa. Oh, Richard! oh, my dear! here is the child——"

"Oh! this is the child, is it?" said Richard, with a momentary faintness coming over him. He did not snatch the little fellow into his arms, as his mother thought he would. He did something very different, for the poor man was short-sighted, a thing which none of us can help. He took up nervously that double eyeglass which the French call a *pince-nez*, and put it on his nose. He could not have seen otherwise had his heart been ever so tender; but it would be impossible to describe the shock, the chill, which this simple proceeding brought upon Lady Eskside. Was there, then, no paternal instinct in her son's heart—none of the feeling which had made her own expand and glow towards the boy? Was her impulse of nature

wrong, or his deadened? The old lord looked on curiously too, but with less vehement feeling, for Lady Eskside had a deeper stake in the matter. She felt that to find herself mistaken, and to have to give up the child whom she had adopted into her warmest affections, would be her death-blow.

"Richard! you don't think—your father and I—have been wrong?" she cried.

It was on Lord Eskside's lip to say that this rash adoption was none of his doing, and thus give up his wife to her fate; but he was sorry for her, and held his tongue, watching the man and the child as they stared at each other with gradually growing interest. The boy stood, holding by Lady Eskside's gown, with a baby scowl upon his soft little forehead, half raising one arm with instinctive suspicion, as he had done on the night of his arrival to ward off an imaginary blow. Richard sat opposite and gazed at him intently through his *pince-nez*. Something pathetic, tragic, terrible, yet ludicrous, was in the scene.

"Richard," faltered Lady Eskside, "don't keep me in this suspense. Do you suppose—do you think—it is not him?"

"What is your name?" said Richard, looking at his son. "Val?—you are sure you are Val and not the other? Yes. I suppose, then, he's the eldest," he said hurriedly, getting up and walking away to the window at the other end of the room. The old couple were too much surprised to say anything. They gave a wondering glance at each other, and Lord Eskside, putting up his hand, stopped the crowd of wondering questions which was coming from his wife's lips. Richard stood perhaps two minutes (it seemed an hour), with his back to them, looking out from the window. When he returned, his voice was

husky and his face paler. "You have done quite right, mother, to take him in," he said, in low tones, "so far as I can judge." Then, with a suddenly heightened colour, "He is like—his mother. No one who has ever seen *her* could fail to recognise *him*."

"Richard! oh, take him in your arms and give your child a kiss!" cried Lady Eskside, with tears in her eyes. "Oh, take your own mother's word, it is you the darling is like—you, and none but you!"

"Is that like me?" said Richard, touching his son's dark hair, with a harsh laugh; "or could we be mixed up, we two, in anything, even a child's face? No; the eldest was hers—all hers. Don't you recollect, mother? I was pleased then, like an idiot as I was. The other," he added, with a softened voice, "was like me."

And then there was silence again. He had not touched the child or spoken to him, except that unfriendly touch; and little Val stood by his grandmother's knee, still clutching her dress, looking on with a bewildered sense of something adverse to himself which was going on over his head, but which he did not understand. Richard threw himself into a chair, his fair, amiable face flushed with unusual emotion; he swung back in his seat, with an uneasy smile on his face, and an expression of assumed carelessness and real excitement totally unlike his usual aspect. As for Lady Eskside, she was struck dumb; she put her arms round the child, petting and consoling him. "My little man!" she said, pressing him close to her side, comforting the little creature, who was nothing more than perplexed in his baby mind—as if he had shared the distinct pain in her own.

"Enough of this, Richard," said Lord Eskside, coming to the rescue.



"Whatever has happened, it is not the boy's fault. Your mother and I have the property to think of, and the succession. It is necessary that you should give an opinion one way or another——"

"Father, I beg your pardon," said Richard, rising to his feet with a sudden flush of shame. "I allowed my feelings to get the better of me. I acknowledge the child. He is too like to be denied. Valentine was the eldest, and had dark hair, like—— I have no doubt on the subject. If my mother chooses to use her eyes, she can see the resemblance——"

"To you, Richard! Oh, do not be bitter against the bairn; he is like you!"

Richard smiled—a painful smile, which sat ill on a countenance of which very nature demanded gentleness. "You may bring him up, sir, as your heir; I acknowledge him. There, mother, what do you want more of me? I can't be a hypocrite, even for you."

"You should remember that you are his father," said the old lady, half indignant, half weeping; "whatever may have happened, as your father says, the child is not to blame."

"No," said the young man. "Do you mean me to go, now that I have done what you wanted? Am I to be dismissed, my business being over——"

"What do you mean, sir?" said Lord Eskside, hotly; "do you forget that you are speaking to your mother——"

"My mother has not a word nor a look for me!" cried Richard. "She wants me for nothing but this gipsy brat, that I may own him, and advance him to my own place. I say it is hard on a man. I come back here, after years; and the first words that are said to me are—not to welcome me home—but to upbraid me

that I do not grow maudlin all in a moment over this child."

"Richard!" cried the old lady, with a sharp tone of pain in her voice; "do you want me to think that though I have got your son I have lost mine?"

"That must be as you will, mother; you seem to prefer him," said Richard, in high offence. It was the first quarrel they had ever had in their lives; for through all his youthful errors she had stood by him always. I do not know what demon of perversity, vexation, and personal annoyance worked in him; but I do know the intense and silent disappointment with which his mother's heart closed its open doors—wide open always to him—and she turned away, all her joy changed into bitterness. When she came to think of it she blamed herself, saying to herself that she had been injudicious in thrusting the strange little new-comer upon him the very moment of his arrival; but then she had judged him by herself—what can mortal do more?—and had believed that the boy would be his first thought.

In this way a cloud fell on the house from the very moment of Richard's return. His was not the prodigal's return, notwithstanding his long banishment and his great error. He had done more harm to his father's house than many a profligate son could have done; yet he was not wicked, but virtuous, and could not be received as a prodigal. And he, for his part, was warmly conscious of personal blamelessness, though his position, so far as other people knew, was that of one to whom much had been forgiven—a complication which was very productive of irritating feelings. I do not mean to say that the cloud lasted, or that Richard went to his room that night unreconciled with his mother. On the contrary, when Lady Esk-

side followed him there, with a woman's yearning, to wipe out every trace of the misunderstanding, her boy fell upon her neck as when he had been really a boy, and kissed her, and did all but lift up his voice and weep, according to the pathetic language of Scripture. But even after the recollection of his petulance was thus effaced, the shock she had received tingled through his mother's heart, and even through her physical frame, which was beginning to be more sensitive by reason of age, vigorous woman though she was. Even without any painful occurrences in the interval, a visit like this, paid after years of separation, is often a painful experiment. The son of Lord Eskside, a homely Scots lord, with few interests which were not national, or even local, was a very different person from the Hon.

Richard Ross, *attaché* of the British Legation at Florence, whose life had fallen into grooves entirely different from those of home. Though he returned to all the soft kindness of his natural manner, the keen observation of the two women who were watching him (for Mary was little less interested than Lady Eskside) soon made out that Richard took little interest in his father's talk, and was quickly fatigued by his mother's questions. He did not care for the parties of country neighbours who were asked to meet him. "Of course, my dear mother, whoever you please," he would say, with a faint little contraction in his smooth forehead; but then probably that was because those country neighbours knew all about him, and understood that they were invited to eat the fatted calf, and celebrate a prodigal's return.

#### CHAPTER VI.

After this first experience of his feeling on the subject, Lady Eskside, though with a painful effort, wisely resolved to avoid further embarrassment by letting things fall into their natural course, and making no effort to thrust his child upon Richard's notice. The little fellow, already familiar with the house, and fully reconciled, with a child's ease and *insouciance*, to the change in his lot, ran about everywhere, making the great hall resound by times, and beginning to reign over Harding and the rest of the servants, as the spoiled darling, the heir of the race, is apt to do, especially in the house of its grandparents. The only person Val was shy of was his father, who took little or no notice of him, but after his first introduction expressed no active feeling towards the child one way or another. Perhaps, indeed,

Richard was slightly ashamed of that uncalled-for demonstration of his feelings. Valentine was his son, whether he liked it or not, and must be his heir and representative as well as his father's; and though it never occurred to him to contemplate the moment when he himself should reign in his father's stead, he felt it wise to make up his mind that his boy should do so, and to give his parents the benefit of his own experience as to Val's education. "You must be prepared for an ungovernable temper and utter unreasonableness," he said to his mother, making a decided and visible effort to open the subject.

"My dear, there is nothing of the kind," cried Lady Eskside, eagerly; "the bairn is but a bairn, and thoughtless—but nothing of the kind can I see——"



"He is seven years old, and he is fooled to the top of his bent—everybody gives in to him," said Richard. "Mark my words, mother,—this is what you will have to strive against. Self-control is unknown to that development of character. So long as they don't care very much for anything, all may go well; but the moment that he takes a fancy into his head——"

Mary was present at this interview, and it was not in human nature to refrain from a glance at his mother to see how she received this lofty delineation of a character which Richard evidently thought the antipodes of his own. Lady Eskside saw the glance, and understood it, and faltered in her reply.

"Many do that, my dear," she said, meekly, "that are gentle enough in appearance. I will remember all the hints you give me. But Val, though he is very high-spirited, is a good child. I think I shall be able to manage him."

"Send him to school," said Richard—"that is the best way; let him find his level at school. Send him to Eton, if you like, when he is old enough, but in the mean time, if my advice is worth anything, put him under some strict master who will keep him well in hand, at once. My dear mother, you are too good, you will spoil him. With the blood he has in his veins he wants a firmer hand."

"My hand is getting old, no doubt," said Lady Eskside, with a little glow of rising colour.

"I do not mean that; you are not old—you will never be old," said her son, with that flattery which mothers love. This put the disagreeable parts of his previous speech out of her mind. She smiled at her boy, and said, "Nonsense, Richard," with fond pleasure.

To be sure it was nonsense; but then nonsense is often so much better than the sagest things which wisdom itself can say.

As for the meeting with Mary Percival, that was got over more easily than she herself could have expected. There were so many other things in Richard's mind that he took her presence there the first evening as a matter of course; and though that too had its sting, she was so great a comfort and help to them all in the excitement and embarrassment involved in the first meeting, that Mary was made into a person of the first importance—a position which always sheds balm upon the mind of one who has been, or thinks she has been, slighted. This state of comfort was somewhat endangered next morning, when Richard thought it proper to express his sense of her great kindness in coming to meet him. "It was very good of you," he said—"like yourself; you were always much kinder to me than I deserved." Now this is not a kind of acknowledgment which sensitive women are generally much delighted to receive, from men of their own age at least.

"Was I?" said Mary, trying to laugh; "but in this case at least I had no intention of being kind. I was here before there was any question of your coming; and I do not know that I should have stayed—for when she has you, Lady Eskside wants no other companion—but that I was very anxious to know about Val."

"I ought to be grateful to Val," said Richard; "he seems to have supplanted me with all my friends—even my mother is more interested, a great deal, in Val's digestion, than she is in my tastes, nowadays. I have to fall back upon the consolation of all whose day is over. It was not always so."

There was the slightest touch of bitterness in this, which partially conciliated Mary, though it would be difficult to tell why.

"I suppose that is a consolation," she said. "I feel it too ; but in your case there is no occasion. They worship the child because he is your son."

"Yes, it is a consolation," said Richard, "so far as anything can console one for the loss of opportunities, the change of circumstances. I find it safer to say nothing on such subjects, and to live among people who know nothing ; but now that I am forced to stand here again, to recollect all that might have been——"

It was a still afternoon, the sun shining with lavish warmth and force, the grass growing, the leaves opening, so that you could almost see their silent haste of progress. They were standing on the terrace outside the windows, looking down over the brown woods all basking in the sunshine, to Esk, which showed here and there in a wider eddy of foam round some great boulder which interrupted his course. It was too early for the twitter of swallows ; but some of those hardy birds that dwell all the year at home were interchanging their genial babble, deep among the multitudinous branches, and a few daring insects hummed in the air which was so full of sunshine. Floods of golden crocus had come out on all the borders. It was not the moment for recollection ; but these words raised a swell and expansion of feeling in Mary's heart which it was not safe to indulge. Soft moisture came to her eyes. Happily that rush of sensation was not strong enough to make her wretched, but it confused her so much that she could not reply.

"All the same," said Richard,

quickly, "I do not agree with Browning in his rapture over an English spring. You should see Italy at this season : everything here is pale, a mere shadow of the radiance yonder. From Bellosguardo, for instance, looking down upon Florence ; you have never been in Italy, Mary ?—a sky to which this is darkness, air all lambent with light and warmth, such towers, such roofs rising up into it, and the Val-d'Arno stretching away in delicious distance, like the sea, as ignorant people say—as if the sea could ever be so full of grace and interest ! It is, I suppose, the junction of art with exquisite nature which gives such a landscape its great charm. Here we have nature to be sure, pretty enough in its way, but everything that man touches is monstrous. Those square horrible houses ! Happily we don't see them here."

The soft flow of feeling which had risen in Mary's mind, and had filled her eyes with moisture, suddenly turned into gall. "No," she said, "I have never been in Italy. I don't know that I want to go. I prefer to think my own country the most beautiful in the world."

"Well," said Richard, "perhaps if you are obliged to live in it all your life it is the most philosophical way."

How little Mary was thinking of philosophy at that moment ! It was well for her that his mother came out from the open window, ready to walk down to the village, which she had made her son promise somewhat unwillingly to do. "Mary will go with us," Lady Esk-side had said as an inducement to Richard, not perhaps taking Mary's inclinations much into account ; for, of course (she reckoned securely), Mary would put her own feelings in her pocket rather than take away a motive from Richard to do his duty ; and there could be no doubt



that it was his duty to visit the old people who remembered him, and who would be wounded if he took no notice of them. "We must go to our old Merran's, your nurse that used to be. She is married to the smith, you remember, Richard? and doing well, I believe, though always a great gossip, as she was when she was a young woman. Her son has come to be under-gamekeeper, and your father thinks he will give him one of the lodges if he turns out well, for he is going to be married," said Lady Eskside, walking briskly down the winding path through the wood, which was shorter than the avenue,—and full of a countrylady's satisfaction in that sway over her humble neighbours and full knowledge of their concerns which is so good for both parties. Richard went dutifully by her side, and listened at least; while Mary came behind with little Valentine in wonderful new fine clothes, velvet and lace, the strangest contrast to his former appearance. He had been a beautiful child in his poor garments; he was like a little prince now, with aristocrat (a stranger would have said) written in every fine line of those features, upon which the noble father and the vagrant mother had both impressed their image. The mother not being by, the child was universally wondered over for his resemblance to his father; but to that father's eyes Val had nothing that had not come to him from the other—that other who had once been Richard's idol, and now was his enemy and his shame.

Merran Miller, you may be sure, had heard every word of the story, and more, and knew exactly how the beautiful boy, in his fantastic, costly dress, had been brought to Ross-craig, and remembered how she had herself seen him make his entry into his future possessions, muddy and crying, "a beggar-wean" by the side of

the mother who went to lodge at Jean Macfarlane's. She knew it all, but this did not lessen the warmth of her enthusiasm for Mr Richard's boy, the bonnie wee gentleman who was so like his papaw. "Eh, bless him, he's like a prince! I wish the queen herself might have the like!" she cried, with all the loyalty of an old retainer, and wiped her eyes with her apron at thought of the kindness of Mr Richard coming so far to see "the like of me!" Richard, after he had said all that was civil to his old nurse, fell back, while his mother inquired into her domestic affairs, and informed her of Lord Eskside's intended favour to the young gamekeeper who was about to be married. "We cannot forget that you were a good nurse to our boy," said the old lady, gracious in her happiness; "and as Providence has been good to us, giving us back our grandchild, who is the heir, and his father at the same time, my lord and myself take a pleasure in seeing other folk happy too." "Eh, my lady, but you're kind and good! and what can I say to you for my Willie—for such a grand start in life!" cried Merran, once more applying her apron to her eyes. Richard strayed aside, and would have fallen back upon Mary, not feeling much interest in this conversation, had not Mary, still affronted, eluded his address. But as he looked round the cottage, something which interested him still more attracted his eye. It was the "aumrie" or oak press in which Merran and her mother before her had kept their "napery" for ages. The connoisseur rushed at it, and examined every line of its old carving; he opened the doors and looked over all the drawers and intricacies inside. "Here is something as fine as any piece of furniture in your house. Ask her if she will part with it," he said rapidly to his

mother in French. His blue eyes sparkled with pleasant excitement, and his colour rose. Since he came back, nothing—not his unknown child, not his parents, not Mary, nor the associations of home—had given him so warm a glow of pleasurable feeling. He was in his natural element once more.

It became still more apparent, however, and in a more agreeable way, how much Richard was changed when the first dinner-party convoked in his honour assembled at Rosscraig. The best people in the county were there, straining a point to show the dear old Esksides (as the Dowager-Duchess herself said) that for their sake their son's misdoings would be overlooked, and himself received again as if nothing had happened. They all came prepared to be kind to him, to forget the disgrace he had brought upon himself and his family, and to condone all past offences on condition of future good conduct. But lo ! Richard was civil to the people who had intended to be good to *him*—he received them with the quiet self-assured air of a man of the world, which is ever so far removed from that of the conscious offender against social laws whom they had come to meet. He spoke with a certain gentle authority as a man much better acquainted with the great world and the highest levels of life than were his critics—giving them pieces of information about political matters, and deciding which was the real version of fashionable scandals in a way which struck the neighbours dumb. “My dears, we are all under a delusion,” said the same Dowager-Duchess whom we have already quoted, addressing a little group in the corner of the drawing-room to which they had retired to compare notes, and make their astonished comments on leaving the dinner-table. “Depend

upon it it's no tramp he has married, but some foreign princess. He's no more ashamed of himself than I am.” And, indeed, a rumour to this effect ran through all Mid-Lothian. In the dining-room all the gentlemen were equally impressed. Before they rose from table, Sir John Gifford, the greatest landowner in the district, and son-in-law to the Marquess of Tranent, asked Richard's opinion as to what the Ministry would do about the then existing crisis (I do not remember what it was) in foreign politics ; and they all listened to what he said about the state of feeling in Italy, and the condition of the smaller courts, as if it had been gospel. “That son of Eskside's, whatever he may have done to compromise himself in his youth, is a rising man, you may take my word for it,” Sir John said solemnly at the next assembly of the county. “And the less we inquire into most men's youth the better, my dear Sir John,” said the Dowager-Duchess, of whose tongue most people stood in awe ; and Sir John coloured, and felt more and more sympathetic with Dick Ross ; for he, too, had known the drawbacks of a *jeunesse orageuse*.

This revolution was made not gradually, but in a single evening. The first dinner-party at Rosscraig was intended more or less to represent that entertainment at which the fatted calf was eaten ; but in the curious change of sentiment that ensued, there was no more thought of fatted calves. The indulgent reception intended to be given to the exile, almost the outlaw, of whom every one had spoken for years with bated breath, turned imperceptibly into the welcome accorded to a distinguished guest. Richard's manners were allowed to be perfect ; he had all the *savoir vivre*, the easy grace, the perfect self-possession of a man of the world. He knew



everybody, he had seen everything, he was learned in art of every description, from the old masters in painting to lace and china; and every lady in the county who possessed either was proud of his approbation. Perhaps he was not quite so great out of doors, where neither agriculture nor sport were in his way; but men forgive much to a political authority, as women do to a connoisseur, and Richard's visit was an event in the neighbourhood. Lady Eskside's feelings on witnessing this revolution were of the strongest. She watched it with a certain consternation, half frightened, half triumphant; the poor boy's humiliation and sufferings were all being repaid to him; yet Lady Eskside was a just woman, and I do not think she was quite sure that Richard deserved to be thus received with an ovation. But where was there ever a mother who did not glow with pride and happiness to see her son the observed of all observers, the hero of her world? Mary Percival, who stood by and looked on closely, a spectator less prejudiced in Richard's favour, yet full of the keenest interest, wondered still more, judging him differently in her heart. Mary's feelings were of a kind which would not bear analysing. She could not keep from watching him, she heard everything that was said of him, she noted his words and actions with a keen and never-failing concern; but her wonder, and a partial amusement which pained herself, yet would not be altogether subdued, were not sympathy. She seemed to herself to be behind the scenes, and to see more than the rest did; and by this means it came about that the rush of blood to her heart, and the thrill through all her frame with which Mary had acknowledged Richard's approach in spite of herself, died away and left her quite calm as all the world

awoke to his merits. This second and less important revolution Lady Eskside perceived dimly, but did not understand.

However, Richard's sudden popularity was the most fortunate incident possible for his child. Many people, after the first eager interest with which they had received the romantic story of little Val's first appearance at Rosscraig, began to doubt it because it was so romantic, and pointed out to each other the much more likely and sensible way of accounting for it. "The beggar-wife is all a myth, depend upon it," said the Dowager-Duchess,—"a myth founded upon the popular conviction that Dick Ross was unfortunate in his marriage. Most of us are unfortunate in our marriages; but it seldom comes to that sort of thing. No, no; depend upon it, the child came with his father, as was natural and proper. What better explanation would you have?" There can be no doubt that this method of introducing a child who is heir to a peerage is a much more comprehensible and reasonable one than a wild tale by which he was represented as having been thrust in at the hall-door on a stormy night. There had been much excitement caused by the story; but that very excitement was a proof to many sober people that it was ridiculous. Why search further? they said. His father had come home on a visit, a very rising young man, and extremely agreeable, and he had brought the child with him. Valentine's appearance confirmed the district in this sensible view of the question. In his velvet tunic and collar of falling lace, he was utterly unlike anything but a dainty little dandy born to luxury and bred with every care, whose cheek the winds had never been allowed to touch rudely. To look at the child was quite enough, said

many. He to have been wandering about the country with a tramp!—the idea was preposterous. He was a little aristocrat all over—from his dark curls to the buckles on his dainty shoes. And when the gentry of the country inquired, as they almost all did individually, into the origin of the other absurd story, it was universally traced to the servants' hall. My Lady Gifford's maid had got it from Joseph the footman at Rosscraig, and the Dowager-Duchess had heard it from an under-gardener who kept the lodge, and with whom she did not disdain an occasional gossip. There is no limit to the imagination of persons in that class of life, many people said ; and it became a mark of fashion on Eskside by which you could decide whether any individual really belonged to the cream of society or not. Belief in the common-sense theory that (of course) Richard had brought his son to his mother's care, was for a long time the shibboleth of the county. Those who had faith in the romantic part of the story were given over to a reprobate imagination, and stamped themselves vulgar at once by adopting a theory so ridiculous. Nothing could have been more fortunate for the young heir. Lady Eskside awoke to the importance of main-

taining this "sensible" view before she had been tempted to utter the true occasion of her joy to any dear friend. Nobody knew the real facts of the case except Mary and the servants. Mary was safe as Lady Eskside herself, and as careful of the honour of the family ; and as for the servants, with their well-known love of the marvellous, how could any one pin his faith on them ? Thus circumstances arranged themselves for little Val a hundred times better than the most sanguine imagination could have believed.

But the story lingered on the lower levels of society, where nobody was deceived. Merran Miller herself, though she had been Richard's nurse, and felt herself a partisan of the family, paused to give an elaborate description of the child and his finery to her friends, when, throwing her apron over her cap, she rushed out to proclaim her Willie's good fortune to all the world : "I wish I was at the boddom o't," cried Merran ; "it's an awfu' queer story. I'm real glad now that it came into my head to give the weans a piece, and that I was civil to the woman. But to see yon bairn decked up like a cheeny image ! and his gaun greeting with a beggar-wife nae later than Wednesday at e'en——!"



## THE TWO SPERANSKY.

## A PAGE OF RUSSIAN OFFICIAL LIFE.

## PART I.—MICHAEL.

WHEN the present generation of readers was young the French books put into its hands were naturally few. We can remember during our own tender years having had our choice between Telemachus, with his island-goddess, Paul and Virginia, with their palmetto-groves, and Elizabeth, in the snows of her Siberian exile. As we followed her footsteps along the weary *versets* that separated her from St Petersburg and from the presence-chamber of the Tzar, we wept over her sorrows; and when we thought of the hunger and cold, the wolves and the snowdrifts, it was only the more harrowing to be told that the tale of the "Siberian Exile" was founded on fact. It was during the reign of Paul that the incident occurred which Madame Cottin has made immortal. A young girl, Prascovia Lopouloff by name, obtained leave from her parents to start for St Petersburg on foot. She believed that she could thus obtain the pardon of a father who had been for sixteen years a Siberian exile. After innumerable dangers, and after an exposure to cold at Christmas so intense that at Ekaterinenburg she was found motionless in the bottom of a sledge, she found a protector in Madame Millin. Her new friends detained her with them till spring returned, and then sent her on her way to the capital. She was presented to the Empress-Mother, and the pardon she sought was granted. Madame Cottin, at this part of the story, introduces a hero and a love match. The "ower true" tale is a much sadder one. Prascovia's

health broke down from the excessive hardships of her journey, and after entering a convent at Nijni, she died of consumption in 1809—ignorant, no doubt, of the celebrity which her filial piety was to obtain under the disguise of 'Elizabeth, or the Exiles of Siberia.'

Another Elizabeth was in the first quarter of this century curiously connected with Siberia. When Madame Speransky-Bagréeff the novelist was seven years old, her father, M. Michael Speransky, Secretary of State to Emperor Alexander, was exiled to Perm, and in 1818, she was again separated from him when he was sent as Governor-General to Siberia. Unlike Prascovia Lopouloff, the real prototype of Madame Cottin's heroine, this young girl never lived in the country, for her health was so delicate that M. Speransky would not allow her either to share his banishment, or to accompany him in his honourable mission. But Siberia was associated with all her joys and sorrows; she was sent to St Petersburg, with the petition which was to procure a pardon, or at least an inquiry into her father's case, and we shall see that these Siberian associations left their marks on Elizabeth's genius, and gave a very original colouring to her best works.

Elizaveta Michailovna Speransky was the Minister's only child, by an English wife, a Miss Stevens, whom he had married when his foot had already mounted some steps of the ladder of success, and whom he lost only too soon. Madame Speransky died almost immediately after the

birth of her child. Elizabeth was reared by her maternal grandmother, but through all the vicissitudes of his career, the statesman's first thought was ever for his little girl.

These vicissitudes make up a page of Russian history, new probably to some of our readers, but a page not the less illustrative of Russian political life at the time of the peace of Tilsit, and very typical of the reign of the Tzar, Alexander, surnamed the Blessed.\*

Michael Gramatine was born in 1771, at Vladimir, in the government of Podolia, and was the son of a priest.

The families of the white or secular clergy of Russia form a large body in society, and are almost, so to speak, its Levitical class. The son of a *pope* or priest generally becomes a priest in his turn, and it is as likely as not that he will also select the wife, who is essential to his taking orders, out of another priestly house. But the young Michael, in his seminary at Vladimir, had aspirations reaching far beyond the post of a village pastor. That he had ever ambitious hopes is evident from the surname which he adopted, *Speransky* being but a Russianised form of the Italian word *Speranza*, or hope. For the monastic life he had no vocation, even should bishoprics loom in the distance for a servant of S. Basil; but after filling the chairs of Mathematics and Physics, in the Newsky Academy of St Petersburg, he became Secretary to Prince Alexis Kouria-kine. Thanks to the good offices of this eccentric patron, he found himself in 1801, a Secretary of State, and thus, at the age of thirty, able to put in execution some of the plans formed in his ambitious youth and boyhood.

This was in 1801; and Speransky,

as Assistant Minister of Justice, as Governor of Finland, as Privy Councillor, and as Secretary of State, continued in office and in favour till 1812. His master was his junior by six years. Alexander Pavlovitch had also begun life with aspirations and projects, perhaps it should be said with dreams. Among European sovereigns even at that momentous epoch—the close of the eighteenth century—Alexander was a man of mark. Among Muscovite Tzars he was as novel as a phoenix. He possessed taste, virtue, generosity, and ability. He saw that a great inheritance had fallen to him—not only great in a material sense, as representing the eighth part of the habitable globe, but great in a moral and political point of view. The sceptre just wrested from the crazed hands of Paul had been intended by Peter the Great to be that of no mere barbarous empire. It is true that its boundaries had been enlarged since then by conquest and treaties, and that Catherine II. had kept up its prestige; but the eccentricities of Peter III. and of Paul I. had threatened to obliterate the Tzars of Russia from the list of the great Western potentates. Of these princes, the second, like the first, had just lost his life at the hands of a band of noble conspirators; and Alexander Pavlovitch had to face the nobility of his kingdom in all the attitudes of turbulence or of intrigue. The prestige of Alexander's crown abroad and at home was at stake, and the result must depend on his own firmness, and perhaps even more on his choice of friends.

To friendship the heart of this Tzar was singularly inclined—and he found friends not unworthy of himself. History remembers his devotion to Prince Adam Czartorisky,

\* Blagoslavenii.



and the mystical intimacy that sprang up later between himself and Madame de Kriüdener. Other ties again were formed with foreigners. There was La Harpe, his former tutor, Sir Alexander Crichton, Sir James Wylie, and Dr Leighton, Scotch physicians, placed by him respectively at the heads of civil, military, and naval departments. Of Russians there were Count Stroganoff, a brave and honest soldier; Admiral Mordvinoff, a Minister whose clemency many an accused had reason to bless; Novossiltzoff, a commissioner long remembered in Poland; and Michael Speransky, who perhaps more than any others shared the philanthropic plans of the Tzar.

Paul, in the earlier part of his reign, had made some not unsalutary reforms, measures which had had their rise assuredly not in philanthropy, but more likely in a spirit of contradiction to the policy of his mother. Alexander determined to do far greater things for the country, and as one of his first steps he adopted a determination to have ministers for the different branches of administration.

The officers so created were eleven in number, and Alexander honestly wished to give them the responsibility which he declared them to possess. Unfortunately, responsible ministers are compatible only with representative governments, and are incompatible with an autocracy; but the Tzar was perhaps the only person, who, enamoured with this new idea and this novel creation, failed to see a want of logic in a responsible (?) Cabinet, which is liable at any hour to the intervention of an imperial *ukaze*. An *ukaze* would override all decisions and statutes, and could not require the signatures of the Ministers. Once before in Russian history had Empress Catherine II. attempted a

similar travesty of liberal institutions. She once convoked at Moscow a meeting of deputies, and there she invited them to compose a constitution called "the fundamental legislation." A Tartar hearing the fame of these new orders, naïvely inquired whether, when the new constitution began to work, *ukazes* would still be in force should they continue to appear? He was told that they would, and he then expressed as his opinion that it was much the same thing to him whether the "fundamental legislation" was made or let alone. For Alexander, in quest of the best of governments, and believing firmly in his new Cabinet, Michael Speransky was a fitting Minister. His own policy, if a Russian statesman may be said to have a policy, was tentative and progressive. His mind, naturally inquisitive and speculative, was not bounded by a purely Russian horizon, and he possessed along with these more imaginative qualities a genuine power of organization.

It is impossible in this place to enter on any detailed account of the projects which he formed for altering at once the spirit, the mechanism, and the details of government. It would interest none but his countrymen, and of Russians only those who have studied the subject enough to be able to compare Speransky's proposals with Speransky's actions, and the measure of reform as planned by him prior to 1812, with the measure since granted to the country by another Alexander. It is enough to say of it that it was intended to comprise a national assembly of representatives, and that he paid great attention to the department of finance, which he proposed to subdivide into four *bureaux*, those of Finance proper, the Treasury, the Control, and the Civil List. Much of this constitution has remained

an absolute dream, and some of it, though existing on paper, has unfortunately become as good as a dead letter.

Speransky's ecclesiastical reforms gave the greatest offence. Not that he was singular in them; for Basil Drosdov, so celebrated as Philarète, the eloquent Metropolitan of Moscow, was, in 1812, one of the most influential members of the committee for the reform of religious schools. Like Speransky, Philarète was a priest's son, like Speransky, a member of the Bible Society, and engaged in pressing on a translation of the Scriptures out of the old Slavonic into the vulgar tongue. But, unlike the Secretary, Philarète was not an envied Minister, nor did he offer the same points of attack to bigoted cavillers. For example, Speransky's wife had been a Protestant, his child was being brought up by a Swiss grandmother, and his own extensive circle of friends already included Quakers, like Wheeler the engineer, Scotchmen, Calvinists, renegades, Lutherans, and foreigners of markedly rationalistic tendencies.

His financial operations had been, however, very much to the point, and they were also successful.

They were works of no common difficulty. After the peace of Tilsit, it was to M. Speransky that the task was intrusted of meeting the financial difficulties of the country at the close of her war with France. We see then that no small demands must have been made upon his ingenuity and upon her resources. The budget of 1810 had presented a deficit of no less than 105,000,000 roubles; but, thanks to the novel methods of taxation indicated by this Minister, the receipts of 1812, (the year of his disgrace!) showed an increase of 175,000,000 roubles, by which the kingdom was saved from bankruptcy. The plan of Speransky

had been submitted by the Tzar to a special committee, meeting at the house of the Finance Minister, and both there and in the Council it had been carried through by a powerful majority.

All this might have led the ingenious statesman to look for the gratitude of the Emperor and of the empire. But envy was more powerful than gratitude or public spirit at the Court of Alexander, and secret denunciations were already preparing the way for a catastrophe.

Meantime the cabinet of M. Speransky continued to be crowded with applicants, clients, and flatterers, and in his cabinet a little girl was generally to be found playing.

Elizabeth adored her father, and she followed him about as Geraldine Necker had followed hers; only when a visitor was announced this shy little child would often retreat, and hide herself behind a pair of globes at the further end of the room.

One morning in March 1812, Elizabeth was suddenly awakened by a servant, and a pencilled note was put into her hands. "I am exiled," it began, "and I have only half an hour in which to prepare for my departure. I have been twice to thy door, but finding thee always sleeping I did not care to awaken thee. I bless thee from afar; and I bid thee join me, with thy grandmother, at Nijni-Novgorod, as soon as everything can be arranged in the house.—Thy father."

The banishment of an officer of State, or of a favourite, was no novelty in Russia; and sudden dismissal from the capital is always a feature of such a fall from favour. Speransky, as he travelled away to Nijni, may have remembered more than one such precedent. Compared with the fate of Count Golovkin, who was banished by Empress



Elizabeth Petrovna to Nijni Kolymsk, or with that of the first Menschikoff, in his distant grave at Bereзов, his own case presented, however, some hopeful features. He was told that "when the situation of public affairs was less critical, the Tzar would take a year or two to examine the data collected with regard to him;" and at Nijni he was received with considerate kindness by all the best families of the province. Elizabeth soon joined him; the climate suited her, and her studies were resumed. In short, father and daughter might have had a great deal of happiness in each other's society, had not an order been sent out, to the effect that M. Speransky's banishment was to be prolonged, and that its place was to be Perm, on the very confines of Siberia.

An enemy had done this,—or rather it was the work of the *clique* of which Armfeld and Balachèff were the leaders, representing, as they did, the whole reactionary party, and one which Speransky could never hope to please.

His birth alone was obnoxious to their exclusiveness. His financial operations, his intimacy with Fessler, and with the *Illuminati*, and his Protestant marriage, were all so many rocks of offence to them. His policy was contrary to the system which they understood, and which they still regretted. What Speransky called "the chaos of *ukazes*" was not incongruous with their notions of government, but all innovations were; for them banks, Lancastrian schools, Bible societies, and reforms in communes and courts of justice, had no charms. They had been accustomed to intrigues for place, to great profits when in place; so they praised the old Russian or "Moscow" system, while they deprecated the more progressive or "Petersburg" policy,

with its ideas borrowed from Western countries. Of course there were honourable exceptions to such a way of thinking; for example, the *lycées* of Prince Bézborodko at Nijni, and of Prince Demidoff at Yaroslav, date from the reign of Alexander: but not the less did the educational measures of 1802 disgust many, and Speransky's enemies identified him with this inauspicious march of intellect.

When they represented Speransky as a traitor to the country, as an associate of "secret societies," it must, however, not be forgotten that secret societies *did* exist, and that alongside of the imperial theories and practice of progress in Russia, there already ran a stream of ultra-liberalism, which gave some grounds for the alarms expressed by the old country, or Moscow, party. Such secret associations they believed to possess the sympathy of Alexander's Secretary of State. Conspiracies with which they were more familiar had pre-engaged their own; and the fact that M. Speransky had in 1807, bestowed a bishopric on Fessler, the renegade Capuchin, while it allowed them to suspect his orthodoxy, furnished them with a new ground of complaint.

It was time for Speransky, when he saw himself thus pursued by the ill wishes of Armfeld and of his party, to put in a word in his own defence, and to plead for a mitigation of a sentence now become so severe. Perm is on the western frontier of Siberia; the latitude of 70° was sure to be fatal to Elizabeth's health, whose chest had always been delicate, for there dreary marshes and great expanses of snow anticipated all the features of Siberian life. Moreover, the Secretary of State was ruined. His private fortune was originally *nil*, his income had ceased, and the strictest economy had now become necessary. In

this way Elizabeth made her first, but by no means her last, experience of the penury which in Russia is too apt to follow on the collapse of an official fortune.

It was now the moment for her to emulate the example of Prascovia Lopouloff, and to come to her father's help.

The young girl returned to St Petersburg, the bearer of a letter, and of a memorial to the Czar.

M. Speransky recapitulated the accusations made against him, his pretended *liaisons* with France, his intimacy with the Martinists and *Illuminati*, his "*carrière désorganitrice*" (*sic*), his introduction of novelties into the departments of finance and of jurisprudence, his delays in the discussion and editing of the civil code (*Swod*), his enigmatical conduct, his want of orthodoxy, of patriotism, and of devotion to the Tzar. He concluded by asking as a solace for all the bitterness that could come to him, as a recompense for all the labours undertaken by the command of the Emperor, for the glory of the Tzar and the welfare of the State, as the price of the integrity of his own conduct, only one favour, —viz., that he might be allowed to end his days with his family, on a small estate which he possessed, and there, in liberty and oblivion, to close a life which, to say the truth, had been already too full of labours and of sorrow.

This petition was successful; but the success of Elizabeth's mission is really only another episode in the traditions of despotism. Untried and unacquitted, M. Speransky, whether innocent or guilty, now obtained leave to return to Nijni and to his daughter's society; and there had a small pension conferred on him. These measures, which were agreeable, could only have appeared explicable to persons already

acquainted with the peculiar notions of justice that prevail under an autocracy. A further acquaintance with the whole system of rewards and punishments as understood in Russia, perhaps also prepared M. Speransky for the next steps of his master. He was, in 1818, made civil governor of Penza, and was finally created Governor-General of Siberia, with a request that he would reorganise the whole civil administration of that province.

To our ideas, if these be traits of autocratic caprice, it is also a trait of suppleness in M. Speransky that we find him submitting to such indirect forms of compensation and rehabilitation, for his guilt or his innocence were still all as unproved as they had been on the morning when he had feared to awake his little sleeping Elizabeth with the news of his sudden exile. But, cultivated and virtuous as he might be, M. Speransky could not afford to stand on his dignity. Then all things in Russia go by comparison; and if tempted to complain, he might perhaps remember that the first Menschikoff had been untried, and had died in exile; while Volynsky, Cabinet Minister to Empress Anne, and disgraced through an intrigue of the Duke of Biron, had suffered a terrible death, the same sentence also condemning his children to perpetual exile. Michael Gramatine, the Pope's son, Secretary of State in 1801, exile in 1812, and Governor-General in 1819, was too emphatically the creation of an arbitrary system, not to be sometimes its creature.

In the mean time the reactionary party, with Armfeld the Swede at their head, and Rosenkampf as their mouthpiece, might still breathe freely. They could not precisely rejoice, for Speransky was again favoured; but the most distant province of the empire was to be the theatre of his future experiments,



and if its misrule had not hitherto affected their spirits, it might be hoped that his improvements would be too remote to hurt either their feelings or their interests. Lancastrian schools and Bible societies in the latitude of Tobolsk would not for example prepare the way for serf emancipation as surely as the education of the home-grown *monjik* must do.

This new Governor of Siberia was in no common way fitted for the task allotted to him. To begin with, he was humane; a quality which he had certainly not acquired by contact with his first master, Prince Alexis Kouriakine. That nobleman had belonged emphatically to the old school. When the humane Lapoukhine had once reported to him the filthy and unwholesome state of the prisons where some political criminals were rotting, and suggested an improvement in them, Kouriakine replied with a strong negative, and gave as his reason that "then they would be no longer *prisons*!" Speransky, to whose tender mercies some thousands of exiles were now committed, had more clemency; and as he also disagreed with another axiom of the Prince's, that "*everything is forbidden* for which express permission has not been obtained," he was not likely to harass his new subjects needlessly.

He was sent to reorganise the civil administration, study the capabilities, and redress the grievances of a country which suffered from many forms of oppression. Now, if Perm had once been his own "*città dolente*," it had also been his school. Possibly Alexander knew his Secretary of State well enough to be sure that this had been the case. During months of solitary exile, studies had been made which had formed the future Governor-General of a province where the skies were even more joyless, and which still more emphatically

proved the worth of the popular Russian saying, "God is in heaven, and the Tzar is a long way off."

The information so collected at Perm had been, what information collected by or for an official very seldom is, authentic. No one could have imagined that the exile of those days would be the Governor-General of the future, so no one had had any interest in deceiving. Data thus gathered were available now, and M. Speransky had observation, sagacity, and charity enough to turn them to the best account.

The demon of misrule in Siberia was hydra-headed, it is true, but he had patience if he had not hope, and he had an unlimited power of application to business. Thus he went, his daughter says, "a new Jermak, to make for the second time the conquest of the country." With what sentiments he really entered on his duties is best learnt from his letters to that daughter. It was impossible, from the state of her health, that Elizabeth should accompany him; he placed her in the family of a trusted physician of St Petersburg, and began his rule with a heart tried by their pangs of parting.

These letters, besides being a picture of manners little known to Europeans, give us a just estimate of the tie which existed between the Governor and his only child. More than that, they assist us to form an opinion of a man whom many have undervalued, and whom others are disposed to blame, partly on account of failures for which he is not responsible, and partly because of the excessive praise lavished on him by others. One virtue he lacked—courage; one vice he lacked—pride; and the boyards of Russia, haughty *frondeurs*, and often revengeful as they were, called him a hypocrite, because the priest's son tried to conciliate them before they had injured him, and did not

avenge himself after they had. Can-  
crine, Finance Minister to Nicholas,  
does not scruple to style Speransky a  
hypocrite; but the letters to Eliza-  
beth show us a man whose temper  
was mild, whose ambitions were not  
purely selfish, and who, perhaps  
because he could see both sides of  
a question, was at once claimed and  
blamed by both parties.

The first letter is dated from  
Tobolsk, 30th May 1819.\*

## I.

TOBOLSK, 30th May 1819.

I have found here, my dearest  
Elizabeth, the same skies, the same  
beneficial sunlight, the same men  
(a mixture of good and evil), the  
same fatherly Providence embrac-  
ing all space, and bringing us to-  
gether across all distances, strength-  
ening my heart, and filling it with  
hopeful confidence.

I arrived here on the 24th of May  
(O.S.) on the eve of Trinity Sunday.  
Notwithstanding the flooded rivers  
which we had so frequently to cross,  
we reached Tobolsk in eight days, a  
distance of 1500 *versets* from Kagan  
—such are the roads and the horses  
of eastern Russia. The fearless  
fairy of the Siberian legends could  
not have flown into my arms with  
greater rapidity, and all the way  
we were both well and cheerful.  
The weather was so favourable that  
we had hardly a drop of rain from  
Penza to Tobolsk.

You may easily imagine how we  
were received; one might say that  
it was with almost universal rapture.  
Even those who feared my coming  
here as a stern judge, having  
wearied themselves out by their  
anticipations, seemed glad to get  
the dreaded ordeal over.

The day before yesterday the post  
brought me your letter of the 9th of

May. I conclude that the courier  
takes sometimes nineteen days to  
reach this place, sometimes fifteen.  
At least I will learn every fortnight  
that my Elizabeth is well. I do not  
know as yet how long I may re-  
main in this place, it will be for  
a month at least; and then I will  
wander to the uttermost ends of the  
inhabited globe.

## II.

. . . Do not listen to the tales  
current about this country. Siberia  
is Siberia, and like nothing else; and  
one must possess an imagination  
which is not only excitable but  
positively extravagant to see in it  
another India. Till now, I at least  
have not discerned any majesty in  
its natural features or any excel-  
lences in its people. The Oural  
Mountains may be called the Rif-  
fean Range, but none the less are  
they a range of dull, monotonous,  
mean, and endlessly wearisome hills,  
occupying a space of 400 *versets*.  
While crossing them you do not  
come on a single point that could  
attract the eye, and not a single  
valley from which you could per-  
ceive a peak worth noticing. There  
are not even any "beautiful horrors,"  
for the Ourals are more monotonous  
than dangerous, and are not even  
that. You will observe that we  
crossed them at the most favourable  
season, and that I am a passionate  
admirer of all that is lovely and  
grandiose. The same must be said  
of the people. At present I have  
failed to discover *what* it is that  
constitutes the "Siberian." I see  
the same vices, the same follies, the  
same patience in the poor, the same  
egotism in the rich. The only real  
difference is that life has a wider  
range here than in general, that there  
is a fertile soil, and in consequence

\* [EDITOR'S NOTE.]—These letters have been translated expressly for the Magazine  
by a gifted countrywoman of Madame Speransky-Bagrëff.



we have fewer poor. As yet I can only see that as far as Tobolsk, and in Tobolsk itself, Siberia is Siberia, *i.e.*, a very good place for exiles, profitable also for certain trades, and not only an interesting but a rich mine for mineralogists. This is what it is ; but it is not a place for living under the conditions of the highest social civilisation—*viz.*, of the stable organisation of property, founded on agriculture, manufactures, and internal trade. Living in Tobolsk itself is, however, cheap ; there is an excellent fish-market, which is well stocked ; but this is only a local advantage, and it means nothing whatever for the country round it, since, from the difficulties of communication, owing to the absence of roads, one may die of hunger, and be in want within 200 *versts* of all this abundance.

The southern part of this government is fairly productive ; but one degree further north, one step beyond the highroad, and you are in the desert, in the midst of impassable bogs, where the savage Ostiak hunts all through the winter the ice-fox and the bear, and in summer (which means two months out of the twelve) he lives on fish.

You will think I am giving you lessons in statistics : I merely want to preserve you from the fashionable errors about Siberia. The people who have found out an "Indian empire" here, may pride themselves on having discovered something very important, but which is to me at least unknown.

### III.

June 25.

It is hot even in Tobolsk—36° Reaumur in the shade. Nature will assert herself. My next letter will be from Tomsk.

Study the map of Siberia, in order to follow me on my travels.

### IV.

June 25.

In two days, my dear Elizabeth, I shall be on the southern frontier of Russia, at Omsk, a fortress on the borders of a government formed out of the land inhabited by the half-savage Kirghisses. Our imagination is for ever seeking in Siberia something wonderful and peculiar, and it finds nothing. What a pity that a dull and monotonous reality always destroys the romantic flights of fancy ! This flat material world never satisfies our imaginations or our minds. But the mind of man is a Titan, finding all space too narrow for it ; habit destroys even the phantom of distance. We talk nowadays of 1000 *versts* as if it were of an ordinary walk. The other day the general commandant of Omsk, with his whole staff, paid me a morning visit. They came a distance of 600 *versts* ; they dined and slept at my house one night, and they returned home next day.

### V.

TOMSK, July 10.

We left Tobolsk, my dearest Elizabeth, on the 20th June, and rolled down to this place in the very heart of Siberia, along a plain which is one unbroken slope 1000 *versts* in length. We hailed the first hillock we saw with joyous exclamations, for the monotony of these steppes is wearisome. Here nature begins to be animated. The vegetation is indeed luxuriant ; it would be difficult to imagine fields more fertile or flowers more gaily varied, and were it not that they are 4500 *versts* from you, one might enjoy them ; but my heart is heavy.

At Omsk we were at the outposts of European civilisation. The wild Kirghisses squatted all around in

their *yourts*,\* and they gave me a feast, that is, we assisted at their meal, and saw them devour uncooked mutton, and drink fermented mare's milk, which they call "*Koumiss*." We also had some races, and saw all the young men ride and pursue a cahtering girl, the fairest bride of the tribe, who escaped, by defending herself with a lash. Nothing is so disgusting as nature savage and primitive; if, indeed, it be man's primitive nature, and is not rather humanity grown wild.

## VI.

TOMSK, July 17.

Your letter, my own Elizabeth, of the 8th June, did not reach me till the 14th of July. What a dreadful distance! and in two weeks I shall be still further from you: is it possible not to crave and seek after that eternity which will unite us all? While here on earth everything separates us. Think with your pen in your hand: it is the only way to moderate and regulate the flights of one's fancy. Feeling, in its true sense, is that faculty which enables man to understand and to enjoy the beautiful in man and in nature, and in the material world. The lower faculties of feeling are given to all thinking beings, the higher to very few. The Ostiak derives some enjoyment from his beads and his wild music; but the higher enjoyments depend on the harmony of our faculties, and on the perfection of one's moral culture; and above all, in the fulness and abundance of our spiritual life. There is a popular saying among us, such a one "has much spirit,"—that is, much character. Sentiment, however, is not feeling: no more are nervous tears. You say that you are growing older. For God's sake, Elizabeth, do not allow yourself to

do that. Do not lose your rosy thoughts. Do not fill your heart with useless fears. Are we not always and everywhere in His hand? The past must be always to you a guarantee for the present and for the future.

The government of Tomsk, by its riches and the moderate climate of its southern division, might vie with the best governments of great Russia, but the bad administration of the last years has turned it into a den of thieves. These discrepancies between what is and what might be, break my spirit, and my hopes of a change are very faint as yet.

## VII.

TOMSK, Aug. 1.

Your letter, dear Elizabeth, was like a sonata of Haydn's amid the din of complaints and the discord of passions which surround me here. From all you tell me about your school children, I begin to think that you are going to be another Miss Edgeworth! In winter I shall drive as far as Khiakta, and make my obeisance, at a respectful distance, to the Emperor of China.

## VIII.

IRKUTSK, Sept. 6.

Yesterday we had a ball and a dinner in the Commercial Hall of Irkutsk. A ball! but who dances? There were twenty-four couples in the Ecossaise: thus does our beloved country progress towards its civilisation! I have arranged that there should be weekly assemblies, because I want to form a social circle. I want to do away with the effects of the grim administration that obtained here. The inhabitants have, however, some difficulty in believing that I have inaugurated in reality a new order of things;

\* Nomad tents.



but with a certain amount of liberty in their social intercourse they will begin to breathe freely again.

About our assemblies—I begin the ball by a polonaise with an old lady in a cloth-of-silver dress, who wears a silk kerchief on her head. The women are all merchants' wives or daughters. Everything is cheerful and decorous, and till I came here they never led such pleasant lives. Irkutsk was another Spain. We have also a charitable society, of which the funds already amount to 8000 roubles, for these people are rich and generous. We have opened a Lancastrian school, to which my books have given the necessary impetus, and we are going to organise a Bible society; and thus, once everything gets into working order, our winter will pass cheerfully. Do not wish yourself a boy for my sake. You were born to be my own Elizabeth, and a change of sex would not help your journey to Siberia, for which the only thing needful is a good carriage, and thirty days of patience, whatever be your sex. How enormous this Russian empire is! and yet we find here the same men, the same populace, the same customs, morals, and manners. This uniformity in unity is hardly credible, there is so much more variety in other kingdoms. I believe the reason of our uniformity is that this country has been peopled by settlers from all parts of the empire, who have, however, amalgamated in a wonderful way. Do not think that Siberia has been peopled merely by exiles and convicts—there is no greater mistake. The numbers of exiles and convicts are like a drop in the ocean, and we are hardly aware of their existence or presence, except when they are employed for public works. It is incredible how few they really are. The average number is about 2000 persons a-year deported to Siberia, and in

that number there are hardly any women. To you these details will appear strange, but you must try to get correct notions about your own country. I mean before long to publish some statistical tables; and it will astonish you, and all Europe, when you learn that there is hardly one exile or convict in 20,000 inhabitants. Until I came here I was ignorant myself of this, and I did not believe it; and I consider it a great discovery, and an important fact among the phenomena of the moral world. . . .

I congratulate you on having become a teacher; it is good to teach little children, for in teaching one teaches one'sself, and in time you will become quite a Maria Edgeworth.

Speransky was right, for if we were asked to say who and what Madame Speransky Bagréeff was, we should answer directly, the Russian Miss Edgeworth; with this difference, that her Slavonic blood and the griefs of her checkered life quickened in the Governor's daughter what was absent in Maria's character—strong and personal religious feeling.

Her works, of which we shall have something to say later, have a great likeness to Miss Edgeworth's, and her pursuits had the same bearing on the comfort and progress of her fellow-creatures. Already in this correspondence we hear of schools and efforts made to relieve the suffering. A little later we have a notice of one of the celebrated men with whom Elizabeth Speransky formed friendships, and in whose society her taste was formed.

M. Speransky writes playfully: "Your interview with Zoukovsky is indeed an event, as geniuses, they say, seldom meet. The thing cannot have happened since Goethe and Schiller embraced; and since Zoukovsky be as you say a Schiller, why it follows,

and we cannot be mistaken about it, that you are the Goethe!"

Zoukovsky was a poet, a man of great cultivation and gentleness of manner, a charming letter-writer, as his published correspondence both with Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, and with her maid of honour, Madame Smirnoff *née* Rossetti, show: but he is more likely to be remembered as the founder of the romantic school of poetry in Russia. He led the way for the still more ideal talent of Pouchkine, another ornament of the society which surrounded Mademoiselle Speransky at that time. Her father continued to help and advise her thus:—

Aug. 1, (O.S.) 1819.

I think this essay of yours better than the former one. Do not write about events to me. . . . Do not ask me if you will ever be in Siberia, —the very thought of it pains me; as a private individual I might even here find it possible to lead a bearable life, but *not* as an official. I have too much responsibility before God and my fellow-creatures, and my strength is unequal to it.

Christ be with *thee*, my darling! . . . . . I merely write from this small dirty town to let you know that I have not been eaten up by bears or wolves on the Irkutsk road, where I ought to have been long ago, had I not been stopped here by bitter complaints and wrongs. I find here the real Siberia, and I feel here that an ever-just Providence has not sent me in vain. I was needed to lessen sufferings, to revive hopes, which had nearly perished, to renew an almost exhausted patience. . . .

I am quite tired out by my nomad life. . . . All the events of our life are like pearls strung by the hand of our faithful heavenly Father. . . . .

I have not yet been in the regions of the Lake Baikal. From thence I shall go on to Khiakta (Chinese Maimatchân), which is 600 *versts* to the south. There is little snow there, even at this time of year. Two English missionaries visited me lately. They are to settle at Sellingsk, in E. Siberia. They speak no Russian, and no European tongues either. I asked them to dine with me. When the door opened, it admitted a tall, elongated, dried-up elderly female. She is a Scotchwoman and a *piétiste*, wife of one of the missionaries, and is the first visitor of the feminine gender that has crossed my threshold since I have been here. Luckily she was so silent that I found it unnecessary to unfold all the secret treasures of English speech which I possess. One of the missionaries is a very handsome youth of twenty-three or twenty-five years of age, with an open countenance and an angelically pure and innocent face. The recording angel preserve us from fancying that these people have any other object than that of evangelisation in coming here.

KHIAKTA, Feb. 18.

I arrived here, dearest Elizabeth, three days ago, and assisted yesterday at a Chinese *fête* at Maimatchân. What a curious *bizarrrure* was there. like a delirious dream! An indescribable mixture of colours and trifles, with comforts and neatness, and a most confused *tout ensemble*. I leave to-day for Nertschinsk. The winter has been steady here—a rare occurrence, and the roads are good, as there is deep snow. I am the first governor or official who has ever visited Nertschinsk. It lies 700 *versts* distant, but we hope to get there unhindered by the elements. It is not that my vanity or my ambition is flattered



by thus being the first to visit it, but I really hope to do good, and that my journey will be beneficial. Nertschinsk is the place where criminals in exile work in the mines. Who knows what the seed now sown there may bring forth? It is difficult to come so far twice in a lifetime, even where, as in Siberia, distance is made but small account of; so I must try to do all the good I can at one visit. To-morrow I start for Nertschinsk. In three or four days I shall be able to write to you again from there, so that my letter can reach you at Easter. I congratulate and wish you joy already then of the resurrection of the Lord. Across 6000 *versts* I embrace you in the spirit, and repeat "Christ is risen!" His resurrection in our spirits cannot be hindered by time, or space, or habitation.

— NERTSCHINSK, Feb. 29.

"Christ is risen!" dearest Elizabeth. I returned yesterday from the depths; for I visited the mines, which lie at an enormous depth underground. I saw *the last depth* of human suffering and human patience, that of the prisoners. [There being no capital punishment in Russia, criminals are condemned to work the Government mines of the empire. Some political prisoners have also been sentenced to them; but they generally get their sentence commuted after six months' labour. Most of the crimes committed in Siberia are by escaped convicts, or *ticket-of-leave* men from these mines.] We have hardly any snow now.

In these private letters one cannot but notice the extreme caution shown by the Governor of Siberia. The only names given are those of

insignificant persons, and no particulars are supplied of the many abuses, excesses, crimes, cruelties and peculations which he had been sent to cut short or reform. The reason is obvious. The letters might be, nay probably would be opened, and it was not necessary for Speransky to make any more enemies for himself or for his child.

In one letter Speransky allows, however, a cry to escape from him, which tells how much he had felt the ingratitude and harshness of the Tzar. "All love must be reciprocal. One may admire or praise without reciprocity, but it is impossible to love: there must be at least some hope of return. Do not blame the imaginary characters of your book; they are quite ready to love their country, *but they are not loved.*"

Other remarks show with what careful tenderness M. Speransky acted the part of critic to Elizabeth's early efforts. His own pen had not been idle, and the name of his subject strikes a strange note among the rivalries, chicaneries, crimes, and reverses of Russian official life.

"I received (Dec. 10th, 1819,) the proof-sheets of the 'Imitation.' M. Alexandre Ivanovitch Tourguéneff wrote to tell me that he had sent you a copy. I had wished to publish this anonymously, because a work of this kind, like charity, ought not to be trumpeted to the world. Fate, however, has decided differently.\* During my unpopularity, or rather *défaveur* at Court, among other absurdities I was accused of atheism and deism. To justify myself I was obliged to enumerate this translation as existing among my other papers (when seized). I began it in 1805, and have worked

\* M. A. I. Tourguéneff had also taken part in the translation of the 'Imitation' of Thomas à Kempis.

at it ever since and daily. This is the history of my translation."

The reader will say that so many letters from Siberia without mention of snow are really a deception. The following extract must satisfy them:—

"I wish you joy of the coming Day of the Birth of Christ, and I pray that, being born of the Spirit, He may always abide with your spirit. Our cold is intense and cruel—30° and 36° below freezing-point (Reaumur); but I have always been able to get out for a walk till yesterday. I have never been ill or even felt ill here (Irkutsk). Of course I live by rule and take all precautions; but I must go out. The worst is already over. . . . The cattle wander about the fields, and the Mongols, the former lords of the soil, live there with their enormous flocks. One of their princes presented the Government with 1000 horses for the use of the settlers: this is quite a trifle among Mongols. I am sorry that you have not seen these patriarchs of the eastern steppes. Figure to yourself deacons in cloth-of-gold, with golden belts and sabres, then add to this beaver trimmings, and long hair plaited into one *queue*, and you have a *Taischà*."

We know after what reverses M. Speransky was raised to the dignity of Governor-General of this wintry kingdom. How lightly he sat on his official throne, and how insecure he felt any official position to be, will be seen from an extract, the last that we shall make from the three volumes of his descriptive letters to Elizabeth:—

"Our friends judge of me by public matters, and thereby of my situation, which is, however, truly unbearable. You judge me by the state of my mind, and also

judge me correctly: only my patience and my hopes live on. I hope that all this will end soon, and that this may be my last achievement. This hope gives me strength and fortitude. Did I write with tears instead of ink I should not be believed; were I perfectly happy I know that men would not cease to be envious and suspicious. Everything depends on the party in power, and directing opinion."

The Russians have a proverb which says that "life, like the ice, breaks just at the place where you least expect it." So the Governor of Siberia found it. He wrote these letters to his daughter descriptive of strange tribes, of official intrigues, of difficulties to be overcome, and duties to be fulfilled; but it was in none of these quarters that the ice broke, and again plunged him into a sea of distress and perplexity. Count Michael, the Governor of Siberia, was summoned back to St Petersburg, not by order of his Tzar, or by intrigues of his enemies, but by what is called an unfortunate attachment formed by his only child.

The hero of this romance was an officer in the army, but M. Speransky saw insuperable objections to the match, and he forbade it. Elizabeth was broken-hearted. There must have been some strong reason for such a decision, for her father had once said to her, "You must not give me any place in your future plans, those who love me suffer more or less: no truly happy people ever cared for me, and here my truest friends are the poor and lowly criminals and prisoners." However, he was resolute now, and the girl, always delicate, fell into bad health, pined, and, it is said, attempted suicide. "I ask you," he says to her, "if it is not possible for you to find another who could lead and comfort



you? . . . I can live without any joy or comfort, if thou art happy, my child."

M. Speransky felt his own endurance at an end, and Siberia was forgotten. "At last," he cries—"at last, the long-wished-for, long-expected last letter from Siberia. On Wednesday I reach Russia. I am in the same part of the globe with thee; in Europe. Thoughts crowd into my disordered brain, which I can neither express nor analyse. I want your prayers more than ever, that I may not exaggerate my hopes, nor by their presumption offend a Providence which is merciful to all. . . .

"He can give me fortitude enough even to see thee unhappy, and not to murmur, if it be necessary for thy eternal welfare; if it be His will. Pray, oh pray, my child."

The Governor of Siberia must have been well received at Court, for it was immediately opened to welcome his daughter. Madlle.

Speransky was named maid of honour to Empress Elizabeth, and under the almost motherly care of Princess Kotchubey, was taken into society, where it was hoped that her lost love would soon find a successor.

Aspirants for her hand at least appeared quickly. Among them there was a nephew of the Princess, a M. Bagréeff, then Governor of Tschernigov, and said to have come up to St Petersburg in search of a wife, who lost no time in proposing for Elizaveta Michailovna, then twenty-two years of age. The lovely Elizabeth was first reluctant, and then passive; but after a delay of some months she allowed herself to be talked into it, and then bestowed herself on a man who was ill-suited to her in every respect, and with whose nature her own never assimilated. Not long after its conclusion M. Speransky had also reason for regretting this marriage from a financial point of view; but we must not anticipate.

*(To be concluded in next Number.)*

## INTERNATIONAL VANITIES.

## NO. III.—TITLES.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU says, in a true but decidedly ill-tempered sentence, that kings have two main objects, "to extend their power outside their frontiers, and to make it more absolute within them." He might have added, with equal reason, that another of their objects is to multiply and consolidate their titles; indeed, if we are to admit the arguments of Bossuet, this latter sort of action is obligatory upon them—they have no choice about it. The Bishop of Meaux argues that "kings, like the sun, have not received without a reason the brilliancy which surrounds them; it is necessary to the human race; they are bound, both for the peace and the decoration of the universe, to keep up a majesty, which is but a ray of that of God." This opinion may have been altogether in its place in Louis XIV.'s chapel at Versailles (though those who saw the German Emperor pray every Sunday in that same chapel for the speedy capitulation of Paris are justified in entertaining doubts as to its fitness even there), but it certainly does not express actual ideas; and though Fléchier confirms it by asserting that reverence for regal Majesty should be regarded "as a sort of civil religion and of political worship," we seem, in these days, to have grown altogether outside the state of mind in which such theories were regarded as indisputable axioms. The books on the law of nations allude to them with veneration, but do not presume to discuss their mysteries or to penetrate into their awe-inspiring recesses. It is rather in the treatises on ceremonial, in the chronicles of

two or three hundred years ago—in the older French, German, and Italian special dictionaries, and in the earlier encyclopædias—that we find disquisitions on the fundamental principles of Majesty, and on the titles with which Majesty adorns itself. But, whatever be the sources of information on the matter, they present the same invariable character of detailed reverence, of wilful homage, of credulous and unsuspecting earnestness. These sentiments are indeed so developed in many of the more ancient publications that it is sometimes difficult to avoid feeling a sort of envy of such resolute conviction, of such persistent faith. The authors who believed in Majesty believed in everything; they had no doubts; they went straight onwards to their end without a hesitation, without a flicker in their creed. Even if they state that, because mustard was made at Dijon, its name must necessarily be a corruption of "moult me tarde," the old motto of the Dukes of Burgundy (who were always in a hurry), there is a sincerity about the affirmation which shows that they, at all events, were quite certain of the fact. And so it was with all else they talked about; no matter what they said, they were always convinced of the truth of their own words. The result is, naturally, that the modern reader somewhat mistrusts the asseverations of such unreasoning writers, and that, if he wants to be as satisfied as they are, he is obliged to take the trouble of verifying many of their assertions. Luckily the subject is amusing; what would be an ungrateful labour in another case, be-



comes a pleasant task in this one : though the early history of titles is so much scattered that its elements have to be scraped together from various outlying sources. They are all disconnected; there is no unity in the story; it lies about in bits; it does not appear to have been ever grouped into a whole. If this last impression be correct, if no history of titles has ever been composed, there is a gap for an enthusiast to fill up; but it seems difficult to believe that the ground has really been left untitled: it is probable that books have been composed upon the question, but that they have left no "footprints on the sands of time," as is indeed the case, unfortunately, with a good many books. And yet this is a world-wide subject, which finds its application everywhere, and which a number of learned men in many lands have regarded as possessing qualities of the highest character. Even now there are serious people who look at it with deep respect, and who will protest with indignation against its being included amongst the vanities of nations: The only answer to be given to them is, that it would be of no use at all to be a native of a Protestant country unless one could enjoy the one advantage of Protestantism, which is to be absolutely free to hold and to defend any opinion whatever. They are entitled to do the same.

Judging from what has happened since history has been organised, it seems reasonable to suppose that in early times kings invented themselves first, and then invented titles, in order to frame in and illuminate their glory. Menes, whom we must regard as ancient—the most moderate computation of his date puts him 4000 years back—was a title in himself, for his name signified "the conductor;" and though we know nothing of the special per-

sonal denominations which were adopted by the founders of Babylon and Nineveh, we find their successors in possession of a fair share of honorific appellations, at the moment when their annals become accessible to our curiosity. The Kileh-Shargat cylinder, which is the oldest monument of Mesopotamian history yet discovered, has brought down to us the designations attributed to himself by the fifth known king of Assyria, who reigned about 1200 B.C. It indicates that the potentate in question already used in some abundance the figurative, emblematic, and descriptive epithets which have since acquired the name of "titles." He calls himself "Tiglath-pileser; the illustrious chief; whom Asshur and Hercules have exalted to the utmost wishes of his heart; who has pursued after the enemies of Asshur, and has subjugated all the earth; the son of Asshur-rish-ili; the powerful king; the subduer of foreign countries; he who has reduced all the lands of the Magian world;" and more in the same style. This was pretty good for thirty centuries ago, for a prince who seems to us, at this long distance, to have been a mere beginner in the art of self-laudation; but, as times passed on, the love of titles grew, and, seven hundred years after Tiglath, we find Xerxes saying on another slab: "I am Xerxes the king; the great king; the king of kings; the king of the many-peopled countries; the supporter also of the great world; the son of King Darius." Tigranes the Armenian borrowed "king of kings" from Persia at a later period; and held to it so eagerly, that, when he was beaten by Lucullus, he refused to answer a letter from the latter because it was addressed to him under the ordinary name of king, instead of bearing the plural mention. But let it be remembered

that it has turned out luckily for archæologists that this appellation should have been cherished with such care and employed so frequently; for, if the signs which represented it had not been constantly repeated in the Persepolis inscriptions, Grotefend would have had no reason to suspect that they might perhaps express this much-loved title, and would not have been thereby led to the discovery of the key by which the cuneiform writing was deciphered. It was because Darius Hystaspes persisted in calling himself king of kings that the meaning of these arrow-headed records was found out. If more recent royal titles had served an equally useful purpose, they might, perhaps, have been omitted from the catalogue of the vanities of nations. Alas! it is just the contrary. That is why they are included here.

It is, indeed, most terribly the contrary; for whereas Xerxes and Darius—whom our schoolmasters taught us most wrongfully to regard as gorgeous specimens of pride—contented themselves, in their retiring modesty, with half-a-dozen titles, the monarchs of our own time require at least fifty each. In this respect, as in so many others, the world has got on marvellously since the fight at Salamis; the progress, indeed, has been so vast, the subject has become so huge, that it is an audacious act to attempt to dissect it in an article: nothing but its outlines can be sketched in these few pages; developed at full length, it would fill a dozen folios. And if, instead of limiting our attention to purely royal titles (which alone present a character of internationality), we were to include personal and local attributions too, we should need a goods station to store the volumes we should be forced to write. Some slight allusion to the

latter is, however, inevitable in talking about the former, even if it only be to call attention to the erroneous disposition into which so many of us have fallen, since this century began, of looking upon a title as a privilege granted by a sovereign, far more than as one of the essential attributes of the sovereign himself. If the monarch had no titles, it would be difficult to conceive his bestowal of them on his subjects; it was because he wore golden spurs himself that, in those strange days of chivalry, any knight could confer his own grade upon a deserving squire; and, though the right of *noblesse* to ennoble has vanished with the times of lance and shield, the principle that honour only can grant honour, that rank alone can bestow rank, has remained in force, and finds its application in the universal rule that the sovereign is the exclusive fountain of distinction. Chivalry, with its communistic theory of equality in merit (as merit was understood in those days), shared the power with the monarch for a time, but he has seized it back again; and what Blackstone said of England is true of all other countries now, "The Constitution intrusts the Sovereign with the sole power of conferring dignities and honours, in confidence that he will bestow them upon none but such as deserve them." Generally, in these days at least, he does distribute them reasonably; and it will be owned, even by democrats, that nobility (which is implied by titles) is an institution which fits in skilfully with human weaknesses and instincts, and perhaps even with social necessities. It has generally been independent of forms of government; it exists in every monarchy (except Norway) and in most republics; it preceded and it outlived barbaric times; honour, which, in its moral sense, was but an in-



vention of the middle ages, came long after it; and, though nations now profess to base their motives on justice and on duty instead of honour, we may presume that titles will live down these theories in their turn, and will get on just as well with the new springs of action which the future Radical chieftains of the world may invent hereafter in their stead.

But, notwithstanding this persistent duration and this universal applicability, it cannot be pretended that titles have been of much practical utility to their proprietors. From the Egyptian Menes that we were alluding to just now, who was lamentably eaten by a hippopotamus, down to those six Deys of Algiers who were successively elected and assassinated in the same afternoon by a sensitive population sixty years ago, there have been innumerable and most varied evidences of the now undoubted axiom that "the post of safety is a private station." And if titles have not saved the lives of their possessors in those disagreeable moments through which sovereigns, like common people, have sometimes had to pass, it does not seem to be very clear that they have been more successful in rendering their owners joyful or contented. The King of Yvetot is the only monarch in history whose happiness appears to have been incontestable; and it will be admitted, without discussion, that his position, especially as described by Béranger, was exceptional, and cannot be quoted as an argument. And yet the vanity of the throne has always so violently tempted human nature, that some of the best heads that men have owned have been carried away by the desire of sitting in ermine, with a crown and sceptre. "*Etre Bonaparte, et se faire Sire ! il aspire à descendre ! mais non, il croit monter en s'égalant aux rois : il*

*aime mieux un titre qu'un nom.*" What can be added to such a phrase as this? What words can paint with clearer truth the folly of the pride of reigning?

Kings persist, however; they continue to distribute titles amongst their subjects, and to confer titles upon themselves. The former constitute one of the most vigorous manifestations of local and individual pride; the latter present an aggressive form of the vanity of nations. And yet, however alike the two classes of appellations may appear in this respect, there is an enormous difference in their origin and in their application. No one can deny the validity of the former, because they only take effect within the kingdom of the sovereign who concedes them; but the latter concern other sovereigns and other nations, who may, if they think fit, dispute the titles which neighbouring rulers may assume. And this right of approbation is all the more indisputable because it is not limited to mere honorific denominations. It extends to a much larger field—to the existence of foreign states as well; for every power reserves the right of recognising or of refusing to recognise another power, even though its material existence may be so patent as to need no recognition—even though, as Napoleon said of the French Republic when he was negotiating at Campo Formio, "it no more needs recognition than the sun requires to be recognised." If, then, this latter right is, as we all well know, and as the authors on International Law take care to tell us in imposing phrases, inherent to every independent government, it follows that the refusal to recognise the titles which a foreign sovereign may attribute to himself is but a subsidiary consequence of it—but a result of the higher right to disavow the sovereignty itself in

virtue of which the titles have been assumed. In principle, as Phillimore observes, "it is unquestionably competent to every sovereign to take any title of dignity or authority which it may please him to adopt or the nation to confer upon him;" and yet, as Vattel puts it, "as it would be absurd in a little prince to take the name of king, and have himself called Majesty, foreign nations may reject this fancy, and will thereby conform to sound reason and to their duty." And in another place he goes on to say, "as a nation may confer upon her conductor whatever degree of authority and whatever rights she may think proper, she is equally at liberty in regard to the name, the title, and the honours with which she may choose to decorate him. . . . But foreign nations are not bound to give way to the will of a sovereign who assumes a new title, or of a people who call their chief by what name they please. If this title has in it nothing unreasonable or contrary to custom, it is altogether in harmony with the mutual duties which bind nations together to grant to a sovereign or a conductor of a state the same title that is given to him by his people. But, if this title is contrary to custom, if it implies attributes which do not belong to him who affects it, foreign nations may refuse it without his having reason to complain."

It was essential to begin by this definition of the law (so far at least as there is any law at all) which exists between nations on this question of title-taking, for without it the position would have been difficult to follow out. But, with this explanation before our eyes, we start from a clear ground; we see that, as De Martens says, "if, in consequence of the natural equality which exists between sovereign states, each of them can attribute

to its chief such titles as it may choose to confer upon him, other states have the right to recognise those titles, or to refuse to recognise them, or to recognise them only conditionally." And really this precautionary reserve becomes very comprehensible when we look into the history of sovereign titles, and discover that it brings out the former vanities of royalty with an unsparingness of precision which would probably humiliate the living members of the profession if they knew of it. Let us hope that they are less well informed than we are, and that they sleep at night in peace under the soothing influence of the conviction that their various denominations honestly belong to them.

Now we can open out the books and apply ourselves to the study of the first principle of the science of royal appellations, which is, of course, to divide them solemnly into classes. These classes are, Titles of Dignity, which include all the designations expressive of the monarchial position; Titles of Possession, which refer to territories and dominions; Titles of Relationship, of Religion, and of Courtesy. And even this list, sufficient as it is, is not quite complete; for, subsidiarily, there are titles of incognito, and also the special personal or descriptive surnames which have been borne by so many chieftains from Scipio the African down to the present Red Prince of Prussia.

Titles of dignity are easy to comprehend; they are made up exclusively of words which indicate a function; they apply to any sort of titled situation, provided it be effective, and not simply honorary; they are composed especially of the formulas by which each country habitually describes its head — of Emperor, King, and the various other epithets assumed by the



chiefs of states. And yet, simple as this first category of royal substantives appears to be, it includes so many various designations of sovereignty that it would be difficult to compose an absolutely complete enumeration of all the shapes of rulership that the world has known. Pope has stood first so long that we may put it first once more, though it was not until the fifth century that it became the particular attribute of the Bishop of Rome, who, so far, had been called *Summus Pontifex*: it appears to have been attributed to him by the Concile of Toledo in the year 400. Emperor and King are both older, especially the latter; but Emperor naturally heads the catalogue of pride, for no other title has stood so high in history, no other sound brings back to us as that one does the memory of Rome, of Charlemagne, of Napoleon. And yet this very title disappeared in western Europe in 476, and remained unknown from that time until the new conqueror revived it on Christmas-day 800. It existed meanwhile in Constantinople, it is true; but that is no argument in the case, for the schismatic Eastern emperor never counted in the Catholic world. And then we get to King, the universal King, which has lasted from all time without even a change beyond that of literal translation from one language to another; the rank that has been so long-lived that the Radicals must sometimes ask themselves with perplexity how they are to succeed in finally suppressing so tough an institution, and must wish for more years like 1870, which proved again the truth of Voltaire's saying that "offensive wars make kings, defensive wars make republics." It has indeed been immensely and persistently employed. Its originator can scarcely have suspected, when he set the

first example of it, that he was establishing the most durable of human grades, and that, after him, the earth would behold more kings than the stars we see on a frosty night. (Lest the exactness of this comparison should be disputed, let it at once be observed that, in our latitude, only 4200 stars are visible to the naked eye, and that there have been vastly more kings than that.) Hierarchically the next place belongs to Grand Duke, a designation which was first conceived at Moscow, but which was acclimated in southern Europe in 1569, when Pius V. bestowed it on Cosmo de Medicis. But though Tuscany was the first land to own it, Germany only has preserved it, the seven Grand Duchies still extant being all beyond the Rhine. Then appears Elector, a name full of memories of pride and strife, a name which tells the whole history of central Europe for four centuries. But Elector has not enjoyed the vitality of King; the seven great Electorates that were created by the Golden Bull in 1356, "the seven lamps of the Holy Roman Empire"—which, to quote Voltaire once more, "was neither holy nor Roman"—have now dwindled down to one little shadow of their former name. The Prince Bishops of Mayence, Trèves, and Cologne, the Bavarian Duke, the Chiefs of Saxony, the Palatinate, and Brandenburg, are represented now, alas, by the Elector of Hesse Cassel! This is a fall indeed. That the emperor-makers of the middle ages should (except the bishops) have ended by becoming kings themselves, was natural enough in the times through which they passed; that these great chieftains who had held hereditarily between them the charges of Arch-Chancellors of Germany, the Gauls, and Italy—of Grand Steward, Grand Equerry, Arch-Marshal, Arch-

Chamberlain, and Arch-Treasurer of the Empire—should have struggled higher still, was but a consequence of their nature which was human, though Electoral; but that the grand title of Elector, abandoned by the warrior-priests and warrior-princes who had borne it with savage pride for four hundred and fifty years, should be picked up, appropriated, and retained by the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, is one of those absurd incongruities of history which offend our reason and revolt our imagination. We get next to Duke, which ceased to be an independent sovereign title under Louis XII. in France, and disappeared in Germany (except in Nassau) at the commencement of the present century, with Palatine, Margrave, Burgrave, Rhingrave, Wildgrave, and Altgrave. Landgrave alone, of all the old Teutonic titles, is still kept up by the rulers of Hesse Homburg; and it is as well that it should be preserved, for it is the most ancient of all the special German names. It was invented so long ago as 1130, by Louis, third Count of Thuringia, who adopted it in order to distinguish himself from the crowd of Counts around him. The idea was evidently admired by his colleagues; for Thierry, Count of Lower Alsace, appropriated the same denomination seven years afterwards, and Albert of Hapsburg, Count of Higher Alsace, followed the example in 1186. These were the three real Landgraves, the only ones that were recognised as original by the Empire; all the others were imitations. Margrave was a more modern title; it was limited to the four rulers of the Marches of Brandenburg, Meissen, Baden, and Moravia. We may take Doge next, with its memories of Genoa and Venice; and Protector, which Napoleon renewed from Cromwell when he formed the Confederation of the Rhine. Stadtholder

and Viceroy wake up very different recollections: one carries us to the chilly shores of Holland, the other to the bright skies of Naples, India, and Peru. Voivode, like Palatine, was also a viceroy's title; but the former was Slavonic, the latter German. Czar we will look at by itself, and Hospodar is almost the only remaining title which is worth mentioning; for we need not expatiate on the Bans of the Eastern Marches, though the name exists still in Croatia. Sultan must be counted as Asiatic, for it was first adopted by Bajazet; and with it comes the old name Caliph, which means "substitute," and was originally attributed to the successors of Mahomet; but the Caliphates of Bagdad, Fez, Grenada, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunis, have all become successively extinct, and their rights are concentrated in the Sultan of Turkey, who is now sole Caliph, and thereby Commander of the Faithful. Of Shahs there is but one, though there are three Khans (Khiva, Khokand, and Boukhara), two Imauns (Yeman and Muscat), two Regents (Tripoli and Tunis). Bey, or Beg, has now disappeared; but that it was once a higher name than Sultan is shown by the fact that it was preferred to the latter by Thogrul, founder of the dynasty of the Seleucides. Sheikh belongs particularly to the Governor of Medina, and is otherwise a mere village chieftain's name. Pasha is now replaced in Egypt by Khedive. And there we may end the list, though it is very far from being exhausted. It may, however, be as well to allude to Emir, and to add that, strictly, it is a description, not a title: it is the name borne by the descendants of the Prophet, who are found in every class of Arab and Turkish society, particularly amongst the beggars. The peculiarity about their situation is, that



to be an Emir because your father was one is considered to be very insufficient evidence of your right to claim the rank ; to be so in virtue of your mother is infinitely more conclusive ; but to be so on both sides, is altogether satisfactory. The one privilege of Emirs is, that they are the only people who can wear green turbans ; and as the Sultan—although he is now Caliph—is not of the blood of the Prophet, such of his Ministers as are Emirs courteously abstain from green in his presence, so as not to remind him of his inferiority. Emir has, however, been sometimes deviated from its true meaning, and has been applied as a material title to people in authority ; for instance, Abd-el-Kader took it, though he was but a simple Sheikh.

This enumeration of the best known amongst the titles of dignity is, however, of but small interest. That certain names should exist in certain countries as designations of their leader, is a fact which we may regard as historical or geographical or linguistic, according to our fancies : the real essence of the matter is not there ; it lies, from the point of view where we are placing ourselves here, in the degree of right which each sovereign has to bear and hold the title which he may select. The history of the assumption of new titles is a very large one : it includes a singular variety of extensions, augmentations, adaptations, and usurpations—so many, indeed, that they cannot all be counted. History is full of battles which have been fought for titles ; and though we have grown so careless about them now that we allow monarchs to change their names pretty nearly as they please, the process was not so easy in former times. When Christina of Sweden had herself crowned *King* (not *Queen*) no serious objection was made, because the matter was

regarded by the powers as local and exceptional ; just as nobody said a word when Madame de Guébriant was appointed Ambassador of France, when the Countess of Pembroke served as Sheriff of Westmoreland, and when the Shah of Persia sent a feminine negotiator to make peace for him with the Grand Seigneur. But in cases of male nominations to new titles, governments used to be less courteous and more exacting. It is only of late years that they have grown indifferent, luckily for the five empires and the five kingdoms which have sprung up this century, and which have consequently been received with a bland politeness which showed that they provoked no emotion (with the one exception of the first Napoleon). The last two great king-makings, in 1806 and 1815, were effected by the masters of Europe, and therefore could provoke no hostility ; but the isolated cases of Brazil, of Louis Philippe, of Napoleon III., of Italy and Mexico, were all of the very kind which used to cause bitter opposition in other days, and yet not a word was said about them, other than—“Certainly—just as you please ; we are all quite content.” The same calm silence reigned when the empire of Germany shrivelled into Austria ; when the chiefs of Saxony, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria put on royal crowns ; when Baden and Hesse Darmstadt became Grand Duchies. No one raised a finger then, and it was considered to be quite natural that the Congress of Vienna should confirm those changes, should add Hanover to the list of thrones, and Mecklenburg to the Duchies, and should bestow the title of King of Poland on the Czar. But notwithstanding this generous liberality of disposition, the plenipotentiaries of Europe refused to grant the prayer of that insatiable Elector of Hesse Cassel, who, not content

with the new Electorate that he had invented ten years before, came up again respectfully and said, "Please, gentlemen, do let me be a king too, like my neighbours." At Aix-la-Chapelle, in October 1818, they rejected his pitiful demand, and, at the same time, they once more proclaimed the right of every power to exercise supervision over the titles of the others. This is how they answered that lamentable Elector: "Les Cabinets déclarent que, attendu que la demande de S. A. R. l'Electeur de Hesse n'est justifiée par aucun motif suffisant, il n'y a rien qui puisse les engager à y satisfaire. Les Cabinets prennent en même temps l'engagement de ne reconnaître, à l'avenir, aucun changement ni dans les titres des souverains ni dans ceux des princes de leurs maisons, sans en être préalablement convenus entre eux."

This example shows that, after all, the line really is drawn somewhere even now; and that, notwithstanding the degenerated principles of our epoch, it is not yet possible for everybody to create himself a king. But to obtain a clearer idea of the trouble there was in former times to get leave to change a title, we must go back to the establishment of the kingdom of Prussia, and still more, to the assumption of the style of Emperor by the Czar of Russia. When Frederic III. appointed himself king, he asked leave privately from the Emperor beforehand, (how little that Emperor knew what a serpent he was warming in his bosom!) and consequently got recognised without much trouble by the other powers. But the Russian story is far more complicated: it is the best example we possess of the contentions which once existed about titles; it is therefore worth telling in some detail.

The original denominations of the Muscovite sovereign were Autocrat

(which was borrowed from the Greek Emperors), Great Lord, Grand Duke, and Czar. This last designation was an old one: it was first given to Duke Wladimir, who died in 1125, and some of his successors partially retained it; but, all the same, the Russian rulers continued to be called Grand Dukes till the sixteenth century. In 1547, Ivan II. was crowned as Czar of Moscow, and that title was retained until, after the conquest of Little Russia and Smolensk, they became Czars of All the Russias (Great, Little, New, Black, Red, White, and Southern Russias). During the next century they began to call themselves Imperator, in the Latin translations of the documents which they addressed to other powers. The Emperor of Germany, Leopold I., was, however, so offended by this assumption of a title which he considered to be his personal monopoly, that he wrote to Peter, in 1687, to declare that he would send back all letters containing this most reprehensibly presumptuous audacity. Peter, however, persisted; and in 1721, after his victory at Pultava over Charles XII., the title of Emperor of All the Russias was officially conferred upon him by the Russian Senate and the Holy Synod. Queen Anne of England immediately recognised the new appellation, and called Peter by the name of Emperor, in a letter which she wrote to him that same year, with her excuses for an attack which had been made on the Russian envoy in London. Prussia also, of course, acquiesced in the change, for her own royalty was too recent to allow her to make difficulties with others. Sweden followed in 1723; Venice in 1726; Denmark in 1732; Turkey engaged in 1741 to give the title of Empress to Elizabeth, who had just become Czarina; even the Emperor of Germany recognised the



Russian empire in 1744. Finally, the Courts of France and Spain consented, in 1745, to treat Elizabeth as Empress, on condition of receiving a *lettre réversale*, stipulating that the Imperial title should cause no change in the ceremonial then existing between the two Courts. But when Peter III. succeeded to Elizabeth in January 1762, France wrote to him simply as *Majesté Czarienne*, and claimed another *réversale* before she would call him Emperor. A curious correspondence took place between the Russian ambassador at Versailles and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, but the Russian Government gave way and granted the *réversale*. The same difficulty arose again six months later when Catherine took the place of Peter, for France then claimed a third *réversale*. Catherine was not the woman to stand this sort of worry; but even she yielded somewhat to the spirit of the time, and authorised her Minister Gallitzin to communicate the following declaration to all the ambassadors resident at St Petersburg: "The title of Imperial which Peter the Great, of glorious memory, took, or rather renewed, for himself and his successors, has long been the property of both the Sovereigns and the crown and monarchy of All the Russias. Her Imperial Majesty considers that it would be contrary to the stability of this principle to renew the *réversales* which were given when this title was first recognised. Conformably with this sentiment, her Imperial Majesty orders the Minister to make this general declaration, that the title of Imperial having been once attached to the crown and monarchy of Russia, and perpetuated during several years and successions, neither she nor her successors for ever can renew the *réversales*; and, still less, keep up any correspondence with powers who refuse to

recognise the Imperial title in the person of the Sovereigns of All the Russias, as well as in their crown and monarchy. And in order that this declaration may put an end, once for all, to any difficulties in a matter where none ought to exist, her Imperial Majesty, respecting the declaration of Peter the Great, declares that the title of Imperial shall introduce no change in the ceremonial employed between the Courts, which shall remain on its former footing.—Moscow, 21st Nov. 1762." The French Court considered this declaration to be far too haughty; so it put in the following counter-declaration, which expresses, in singularly clear language, the theory then existing: "Titles are nothing by themselves. They are only real provided they are recognised; and their value depends on the idea which is attached to them, and on the extent which is accorded to them, by those who have the right to admit them, to reject them, or to limit them. Sovereigns cannot attribute titles to themselves by their own choice; the consent of their subjects does not suffice—that of other powers is necessary; and every Crown being free to recognise or to reject a new title, may also admit it with the modifications and conditions which may satisfy it. According to this principle, Peter the First and his successors, down to the Empress Elizabeth, have never been known in France otherwise than by the name of Czar. That princess was the first to whom the king granted the Imperial title; but on the express condition that this title should in no way prejudice the ceremonial employed between the two Courts. . . . The king, animated by the same sentiments toward the Empress Catherine, does not hesitate to grant the title of Imperial; . . . but if any pretension were ever raised contrary to the usages constantly

followed as to rank and precedence between the two Courts, from that moment the Crown of France, by a just reciprocity, would resume the former style, and would cease to give the Imperial title to that of Russia." Charles III. of Spain put in an analogous counter-declaration at the same moment, and then the matter dropped, after forty-one years of discussion.

We can now go on from titles of Dignity to titles of Possession, which comprise, as their name indicates, the list of all the states and territories which the sovereign may possess, including not only his real possessions, but also his fictive or usurped ones. The consequence used to be, that monarchs made up such tremendous catalogues of the lands they governed, and swelled them with so many countries that had never belonged to them at all, that their full-length enumeration became interminable: in order, therefore, to avoid pages of useless writing, the chancelleries cunningly invented three sorts of titles of possession: the Grand Titre, the Moyen Titre, and the Petit Titre. When the King of Sardinia, who was very rich in self-attributed dominions, was described in all his detail as King of Cyprus, Sicily, and Jerusalem; Duke, Prince, Marquis, Count, Baron, and Seigneur of forty-seven other districts, the table was so lengthy that one can understand that it was skipped over whenever etiquette allowed the substitution of a somewhat shorter designation. The King of Naples was in an analogous condition, and he also claimed to be Sovereign of Jerusalem, as the English King professed to be King of France. In treaties and official documents, all these pretended titles were resolutely inscribed; ambassadors who were negotiating peace would have rather gone to war again than have con-

sented to leave out one single ray of their masters' glory: so, as it generally happened that two or more monarchs claimed the same title in the same document (almost every prince professing to be sovereign of all or part of the dominions of every other), it became usual to insert a clause of *non præjudicando*, in order to stipulate that, no matter what were the titles claimed by anybody, nobody admitted them, and that they were simply left in for ornament and the satisfaction of the claimer. If Ghorrum Shah, the fifth Mogul Emperor of Delhi, had signed a treaty with a European state, and had described himself by his special denomination of Shah Jehan or King of the World—which is the largest title of possession yet assumed by any sovereign—the other side would have let him do it without asking for a *réversale*, but they would have shielded their reservation behind a *non præjudicando*. The Titre Moyen, which grew to be generally used at the end of the eighteenth century, was made up of sub-dignities, omitting nearly all the territorial titles. The Petit Titre simply designates the sovereign by the short appellation by which he is usually known, and which is always the highest that he owns.

Titles of Relationship do not imply family connection between the monarchs who employ them. Other people cannot say son or cousin to anybody but their own or their uncle's child; but sovereigns use these words in a special meaning: they employ them to designate political or religious situations, or to mark equalities or inequalities of rank. All Catholic princes give to the Pope the title of Holy Father, or Venerable Father, and denominate themselves his devoted Sons; in reply he calls them "Carissime" or "Dilectissime in Christofili." Em-



perors and Empresses, Kings and Queens, write to each other as "Frère" and "Sœur"; reigning Grand Dukes, and that irrepressible Elector who lives at Cassel, also enjoy this fraternal privilege; but sovereigns who do not possess royal honours are only entitled to be called Cousins. Even Godfather and Godmother have been employed in Germany as forms of royal courtesy; they served there a good deal at one time, and not solely as mere formulas of politeness, but as political realities too; for it was not at all unusual to see a town, particularly a Hanse town, included as an *être moral* amongst the sponsors of a prince: Hamburg and Dantzic were several times God-mamma in this fashion. All this is a very droll shape of vanity, and there is a superb moral to be drawn from it; but there is so much more to say about other elements of the question, that we have no time to idle on the road, and are forced to rush on to the next category without stopping to learn a lesson of philosophy, or to consider what would be the effect in our day if Edinburgh or Southampton were to hold a royal baby at the font.

Religious titles include the special appellations of the Pope, and the distinctive adjectives which he has granted to certain European monarchs. His own names have varied from time to time; his present denomination of Holiness has been restricted to him only since the fourteenth century, before which period Bishops and then Kings possessed it. Louis le Debonnaire, and Bela, King of Hungary, were both called "Your Holiness." The same most inexact description was applied to the Arian heretic Theodoric, who was called "very pious and very holy," by the local Concile held at Rome in 501; and to the pagan Emperors Valerian and Gallienus, who were styled

"very holy" by St Denis, Bishop of Alexandria. The Emperors of Constantinople, though not recognised in the West, were "holy" and "holiness" amongst their own people. And, stranger still than all, King Robert of France, the husband of Bertha and Constance, was called by the very name which the Pope bears now—Saint Père! When Holiness was definitely adopted at Rome, the earlier denominations of Paternity, Beatitude, Grandeur, and Apostolic Majesty, were all abandoned. The other titles of the Pope are older: in the ninth century he was called Vicar of St Peter, and in the twelfth century he took his present appellation of Vicar of Jesus Christ. The denomination of Servant of the Servants of God was first adopted by Gregory the Great. The religious epithets which have been bestowed by the Holy See on favoured kings are all modern. Very Christian belongs to France; Catholic was conferred on Ferdinand for his conquest of the Moors; Defender of the Faith was confirmed by Act of Parliament (this is vastly comical) after the Pope had withdrawn his gift of it to Henry; Portugal possesses Very Faithful; Hungary has Apostolic Majesty; and the Sovereign of Poland was Orthodox. The strangest thing about these titles of religion is, not that they should exist at all, but that—existing—monarchs, who are so fiercely eager for ornamental names, should not use them. And yet it is so. The Queen of England and the Emperor of Austria are the only rulers who describe themselves by their religious titles; the others simply allow these denominations to be employed towards them by foreign powers—or, more exactly, that is what Portugal still does, and what France, Spain, and Poland used to do when they possessed kings.

This is the one example which exists of voluntary renunciation of an honour amongst sovereigns.

Titles of Courtesy form one of the largest branches of the subject. The reverential salutations of Sire, Majesty, Highness, Monseigneur, are all included in this category. Each of them has a history to itself; each of them has its place marked out with scrupulous precision. Sire was for a long time synonymous with Seigneur, which itself was not a title, but only the substantive which designated the chieftain of a district; and as, in old times, every district had a chieftain—"point de terre sans Seigneur," said the law—it followed that there were a good many Sires and Seigneurs. The memory of some of them has come down to us. Who has not heard of the Sire de Coucy and his motto? "Ni Roi, ni Duc, ni Comte ne suis; je suis le Sire de Coucy." The Sires de Rohan, de Joinville, de Créquy, were others who left a name in history. The application of this syllable to sovereigns alone is a very new habit. Majesty is far older; it is indeed the most ancient of all the list of courteous titles, for it was originally assumed as a personal adornment by Diocletian. Still it came into use amongst our rulers at a relatively recent period, and, in the first instance, as a religious designation only, as is proved by a letter of the Emperor Charles IV., who, in 1355, addressed Cardinal Colombier, Chief of the Sacred College, as Your Majesty. But shortly afterwards, the Emperors, who to that time had been called Serenity and Grace, began to entitle themselves Majesty; and Louis XI. of France imitated their example, the King of Naples and the Duke of Milan being the first foreign princes who recognised him by this name. Still it was not universally adopted; it was regarded

as a new fashion, and it had some difficulty in making its way. In the treaty of Cambrai (1529) Charles V. is, however, called Majesty at last; and in the treaty of Crespy (1544) he is denominated Imperial Majesty, and Francis Royal Majesty, this being the first occasion on which these two titles appeared face to face. Francis does not seem, however, to have cared much about it, if we are to judge, at least, by an answer which he made to a letter which he got from Charles, beginning with two entire pages of imperial titles: his reply commenced, in studious contrast, by the simple sentence "Francis, King of France, Bourgeois of Paris." But the Majesty of Charles and Francis was not copied: other sovereigns continued to be called Highness, Magnitude, Celsitude, or Altitude (it should be observed that all these nouns express dimension); and when Catherine de Medicis tried to get herself made a Majesty, like her father-in-law, the Parliament of Orleans refused to authorise it. Henry III. introduced the plural words Their Majesties, on his return from Poland; and yet, notwithstanding this, he was generally called Highness. Ferdinand and Isabella were simple Highnesses; and even Charles V., though Majesty as Emperor, was Serenity as King of Spain. Philip II. was the first Majesty in the Peninsula; but the Emperor Maximilian never called him so, and gave him nothing but Serenidad. Sebastian of Portugal imitated Philip a few years afterwards, and adopted the new name; but his immediate successors dropped back again to Highness. Henry VIII. was first called Majesty by Francis at the Field of the Cloth-of-Gold; he liked the name and took it home with him. To his time the Sovereign of England had been Your Highness and Your



Grace. The result of all this was that, by the end of the sixteenth century, the kings of Europe had crept successively into Majesty; but though they all claimed it for themselves, they did not all give it to each other. The Chancery of the Empire was—as might have been expected in the face of such an audacious invasion of its rights—particularly obstinate about it, and refused to recognise a Majesty in France till 1648, and in any other State till 1741; to that date it went on calling all kings Serenities. Even in the preliminaries of peace after the Thirty Years' War, when the Emperor was well beaten, he called himself His Sacred Cæsarian Majesty, and described the King of France, his conqueror, as simply the Most Serene Christian King. France was more generous than this; for she conceded Majesty to Denmark in 1700, and to the then newly-invented King of Prussia in 1713. There is perhaps more vanity in this story of the growth of Majesty than in the history of any other of the titles which kings have bestowed upon themselves.

Next to Majesty comes Highness, which was originally invented towards the end of the Roman Empire, when *Altitudo* first appears; down to the tenth century, however, it was mainly employed by bishops, who, curiously enough, seem to have made a trial of nearly all the lay titles now in use. Three centuries later it had filtered into Italy, and was absorbed thence into Germany under the guise of *Hoheit*, and applied to sovereigns who were vassals of the Empire. When kings began to denominate themselves Majesty, Highness descended to princes and to sons and brothers of sovereigns. Philip II. at once appropriated it for his children, who were the first Highnesses in Spain; indeed Spanish sovereigns

seem to have regarded Highness as having suddenly become their personal property, as a title which they alone could confer on others—for Philip II. offered it in 1590 to the Duke of Mantua, provided the latter would make him a loan of 300,000 crowns; and when Philip V. went to Italy in 1702, he bestowed the rank on the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Parma. This investiture did not, however, satisfy everybody, for there was a certain *curé* of Montferrat who refused to call the Duke of Mantua *Altitudo*, on the ground that the name belonged to God alone; which argument he proved by quoting from his breviary the phrase, "*tu solus altissimus*." While all this was going on, Gaston d'Orleans, brother of Louis XIII., set the example of adding on Royal to Highness; the nephews and the nieces of Louis XIV. did the same; and, encouraged by these examples, the Prince de Condé called himself *Altesse Sérénissime*. The Duke of Vendôme, however, did not dare to do the same, although he was desperately inclined to try. Then Victor Amadeus II. of Savoy, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Duke of Lorraine, made themselves Royal Highnesses like the others; and finally, *Altesse*, by itself, was abandoned by all princes of the blood, and was left to members of collateral branches. In 1736, the Duke of Holstein Gottorp became *Celsitudo Regia*, which would be an excellent name for a new plant, but scarcely represents our present notion of a princely title. Since the beginning of this century it has been usual to call all princes of the blood Imperial or Royal Highnesses; and yet, in 1815, Louis XVIII. gave only *Sérénissime* to the Duke of Orleans: it was not till 1825 that the latter became *Altesse Royale*. The German *Hoheit*, although it is

accepted as the equivalent of Highness, has changed its character since 1818, when the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle decided that Hoheit should become an intermediate title between *Altesse Royale* and *Altesse Sérénissime*. But notwithstanding this elaboration of its sense, Hoheit is invariably accompanied by the elevating adjective *Kaiserliche* or *Königliche* when it is applied to princes of imperial or royal blood. The title of Hoheit alone was adopted in 1844 by the reigning princes of the old ducal families of Germany, such as the Saxon Duchies, Anhalt, Nassau, and Brunswick, in contradistinction to *Durchlaucht*, which from that date has become the appellation of the princes who are not issued from ancient reigning families, and of such subject princes as may receive the gift of it from their sovereign. The distinction between the two titles is real enough: even the dictionaries seem to understand it, for they translate *Durchlaucht* simply "Highness;" while Hoheit is said by them to signify "Highness, greatness, grandeur, sublimity, majesty, augustness, and eminence," which is a good deal for one word to imply, and for one prince to merit. A third form, *Erlaucht*, was granted by the Diet, in 1829, to the families of the mediatised Counts, in contradistinction to *Serene Highness* which it had accorded in 1825 to the fifty mediatised princes. The word *Erlaucht* has the reputation of being untranslatable; there are, however, people who say that it means *Illustriousness*; perhaps the easiest way of rendering it into English would be to call it *Earlship*.

We should be wrong to laugh too scornfully at these refinements of German shades of rank, for there is nowhere in the world a people which has subdivided titles as we English have. We do not think of counting up the forms which we

have invented, because they seem quite natural to us from habit; but when we have verified the twenty-seven sorts of denominations which exist in the British peerage—without including our special grades of baronet and knight—we shall own, perhaps, that no other land can match our wild extravagance of signs of rank. Our system possesses another peculiarity also proper to ourselves alone: our House of Lords is the only senate in the world which is composed exclusively of hereditary peers. In Spain, Prussia, Austria, and the other German states, the Upper House is made up of three sorts of members—some of them are hereditary, some sit in virtue of the offices they hold, others are nominated by the sovereign. In Belgium, Holland, and Denmark, the Senate is elected like the Lower Chamber. Here, perhaps, our system has a certain merit; but our profusion of graduated differences of titles is of no possible use except to puzzle foreigners. We have, proportionately, almost as many of them as of family names, in which we are notoriously the best-provided people of the old continent, for in England only we have 40,000 of them, or a rough average of one name for every five hundred individuals. We have carried this adoring love of variety of names and titles even into our army, where we have created five kinds of rank altogether irrespective of military grades properly so called; our army rank may be regimental (substantive), brevet, local, temporary, or honorary, and we might almost add "relative" to this absurd list, which no other nation can understand. In our navy, at all events, rank is rank; there our officers are in reality what they say they are. The French have five tiers of nobility, like ourselves; but each member of



the five categories puts simple Monsieur before his name, with no addition of courteous flatteries like Grace, Most Honourable, or Right Honourable — with no Lady Mary, Lord John, or Lady John. Even before 1789 there were only eight sorts of nobility in France: 1. The King; 2. *Noblesse couronnée*, which included solely the princes of the blood; 3. *Noblesse de race*, or *noblesse d'épée*, which was hereditarily transmitted from father to son; 4. *Noblesse par lettres*, which was conferred by the king; 5. *Noblesse d'office*, or *de robe*, which was obtained by appointment to certain judicial offices; 6. *Noblesse de clocher*, which grew up in the provinces by holding the post of mayor or *échevin*; 7. *Noblesse de coutume*, which was transmitted by a mother to her children, even if their father were not noble; 8. *Noblesse bâtarde*. There was also a ninth sort, called *noblesse de finance*, which was considered unworthy to be included in the list, because it was bought for money. All this has disappeared now; the *noblesse de race* alone continues to exist as a purely personal possession, unrecognised politically.

After this parenthesis about French and English titles, we can go back to Prince, which occupies a position by itself. It means "first;" and the consequence of its meaning has naturally been that there have been princes of all kinds, from the Roman Princes of the Senate, from the two adopted sons of Augustus Cæsar whom he appointed "Princes of the young men," from the Prince of the Apostles and the Princes of the Church, to the Prince of Doorkeepers (*Princeps apparitorum*) who kept the gate of the French Parliament. In the early times of the French monarchy the bishops, dukes, and counts were all called Princes;

but there were no born princes then, for in those days relationship gave no rank, even to the sons of kings. Under Charles VI. the title of Prince belonged only to kings and dukes, and to the seigneurs of such lands as composed a principality. Christine de Pisan, in her '*Cité des Dames*,' says: "En diverses seigneuries sont demeurantes plusieurs puissantes dames, çà comme baronesses et grand-terriennes, qui pourtant ne sont appelées Princesses, lequel nom de Princesse n'affiert être dit que des Emperières, des Roynes, et des Duchesses, si ce n'est-aux femmes de ceux qui, à cause de leurs terres, sont appelés Prince par le droit nom du lieu." It was only in the fifteenth century, under Charles VII. and Louis XI., that the position and prerogatives of members of the royal family were determined; it was then that the name Princes of the Blood was first invented. Henry III. confirmed their status by an ordinance in 1576, and Louis XIV. defined their powers with precision in his edict of 1711. Loyseau, who wrote in the time of Henry IV., confirms the modern date of royal princes when he says, "il n'y a pas longtemps que les males issus de nos rois se qualifient Prince en vertu de leur extraction." In Germany none but the members of sovereign houses are called Prinz; subjects who have been raised to princely rank are denominated Fürst, the latter title being the special designation of "principalities of erection." Thus Prince Bismarck bears upon his cards "Fürst von Bismarck, Kanzler des Deutschen Reiches." He is not "Prinz" in Germany; and it may be added that his rank of Fürst is inferior to Duke (Herzog), which comes in between the two sorts of Princes.

Monseigneur, which once was

copiously employed, is almost forgotten as a royal title; the last lay personage who bore it was Prince Napoleon: it now belongs exclusively to prelates, who, since Richelieu adopted it, have ceased to be addressed (as they used to be) as "Révérendissime Père en Dieu."

Originally Monseigneur was an attribute of the Dauphin; but it was applied as a distinctive appellation to nobody but the Grand Dauphin, son of Louis XIV. Padischah can hardly be omitted from the list, though in its Eastern sense it is rather a title of dignity than of courtesy. In Europe, however, it became known in the latter character, as a formula of politeness accorded by the Sultan to the King of France, and, at a later period, to the Emperors of Austria and Russia. As this has taken us back again to Turkey, it will be as well to profit by the opportunity and to mention, though it is not quite in place, that Mahomet II. was the first Turkish monarch who was called by Europeans the Grand-Turk. The Sultan of Cappadocia was spoken of by Monstrelet as the Little-Turk; but though the smaller Turk was soon afterward absorbed by the larger, and though all comparison between them was therefore at an end, the superlative denomination continued to exist as the property of the ruler of Constantinople.

Excellency, which at present is the property of Ministers, of Ambassadors, and of everybody who goes to Naples, formerly belonged to Kings alone. Henry IV. conferred it for the first time on an ambassador when he gave it to the Duke de Nevers, his representative at Rome. It was then generally adopted for foreign envoys, but Monarchies at first refused it to the representatives of Republics.

Venice succeeded, however, in obtaining it for her diplomatic agents in 1636, after much intriguing; and since that date it has been universal. It is given, too, in Germany, to Intimate and Actual Privy Counsellors, to Field-Mmarshals, and to some other functionaries.

Eminence was reserved to Cardinals by a Bull of Urban VIII., in 1630; till that time they had been Most Illustrious and Most Reverend. The knights of Malta called their Grand Master "Eminence Sérénissime;" the Ecclesiastical Electors of Germany were also Eminences.

In addition to these distinctive appellations, there is a formula which is employed by a good many sovereigns when speaking of themselves, and which, though not a title, belongs most evidently to the family of royal designations. Kings frequently assert that they hold their crown "by the grace of God." Originally this phrase had no connection with the theory now known as Divine Right; for the latter is altogether modern, while the words in question were employed by bishops in the fourth century, and by certain monarchs from the tenth century, when some of them described themselves as holding power "by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See." The true meaning of the statement was probably to indicate the subservience of sovereigns to the Pope, who was then the generally accepted king-maker. These were the days when Silvester II. raised Hungary to a kingdom in favour of Saint Stephen, the first sovereign of the house of Arpad; when Popes Eugene and Alexander III. confirmed Alfonso in the rank of King of Portugal, which had been offered to him by his army; when Innocent II. invested Roger as King of Sicily. All this shows distinctly that "the grace of the



Holy Apostolic See" was a reality on earth; but it had nothing at all to do with *droit divin*, which is a very different institution, scarcely a couple of centuries old. The Roman emperors never heard of it; they held their place from the soldiers or the people. Even in the twelfth century, the legists of Bologna admitted no other source of royalty than the *vox populi*: they said, "By the *regia* law which constituted the empire, the people has transferred its own power to the prince." And yet the idea of a religious source of political authority would seem to have assumed a vague uncertain form after Pepin set the example, in 752, of asking for the consecration of the Church. But the theory of Divine Right, in its present sense, is altogether new. It seems, indeed, to have been invented in England in Charles II.'s time, by Filmer; for he was the first to argue that hereditary monarchy, by order of primogeniture, is the only government in conformity with the will of God—that it is a divine institution—that no contrary right can be invoked against a prince who possesses power "*Dei gratiâ*." Bossuet took up the idea with enthusiasm, and defended it with brilliancy. It was, indeed, natural that he should do so, for it just fitted in with the attitude of homage which he assumed toward his royal master; but even he could not give it durability; and it has so died out in our time, that it is almost surprising to see both Guizot and Macaulay take the trouble to seriously attack it. The former defined it with exactness when he said: "This is the formula of a power from which the people must support everything, and which cannot disappear, however mad and incapable it may be; of a power which pretends to be above all rights, to be imprescriptible, and which would

remain inviolable if all other rights were violated." And yet this power—so thorough, so independent of control—has contributed scarcely anything to royal titles. The details which have been given here of the origin of the present appellations borne by sovereigns, show that those appellations are, with scarcely an exception, anterior to Divine Right; indeed, it would almost seem as if monarchs left off inventing new denominations for themselves when they woke up to the satisfying notion that they were the elect of Heaven. If so, they acted logically; for it would palpably be useless, and perhaps, indeed, irreverent, to continue to add adorning names to rulers whose sceptre has ceased to be bestowed upon them by human hands. So long as kings made themselves, or so long as their subjects made them, the multiplication of fresh titles was but a natural consequence of the vanity of both. When kings imagined that they were direct delegates from on High, they respectfully suspended further earthly ornamentings of their office. Now that they are relapsing to human origin once more, they will perhaps begin again to coin titles for themselves; and the day may come when Royal Highness will fade away and be replaced by Splendid Brilliancy, Inconceivable Superbness, or Extreme Enormity, and when kings will be deferentially addressed as your Stupendousness, your Vast Infinity, or your Supreme Excessiveness. If so, Sire and Majesty will, of course, descend to Dukes, Peers' daughters will grow into Serene Princesses, and the lower classes generally will become Baronets. That is what is understood by "progress."

*Sobriquets* which indicate a personal peculiarity constitute the last category of royal appellations; and

really they have a special use in history, inasmuch as they generally transmit to us a tolerably exact idea of the moral or physical peculiarities of the sovereign to whom they were attributed. Of course no diplomatic writer who respects either his subject or himself would condescend to class them amongst royal titles ; but, in fact, they are infinitely more useful to us, practically, than the more serious appellations which the authors cherish. Children read with curious interest the names which tell them of the long hands of Artaxerxes, of the red beards of the Barbarossas, of the long hair of the Norwegian Harold, of the short legs of Robert Courteuise, of the poverty of John Lackland. These details do not fade away—they rest solidly in our memory ; and, humiliating as it may have been for kings to have received denominations so utterly unworthy of their grandeur, those names now serve as sign-posts in the history of their period. They remain and will go on remaining—nobody will forget them ; but the same cannot certainly be said of the other designations which have been mentioned here. All Frenchmen, without exception, know that Henri Quatre was the Roi Vert-Galant, and can tell the reason why ; but scarcely any of them are aware that he was the first king of France “*par la grace de Dieu.*” This may be annoying to the learned enthusiasts who theorise about titles, but it is true and it is natural.

There is nothing else to be added to the list, so far as sovereigns are concerned. The rough sketch of the subject which has been given here indicates the main outlines of the forms which it has assumed ; people who are curious about this sort of pride can carry their study into further detail. Here there is no

room for more extension about monarchs ; for, in the short space still available, we have to glance at another huge branch of this wide-spreading tree—we have to enumerate some of the chief titles of kings’ children. Thus far we have looked at the parents only ; we must turn our eyes now to the offspring for a moment.

The eldest sons of sovereigns present three main categories of titles — general, special, or local. The first class includes Prince Imperial, which is now borne in Austria, Germany, and Brazil ; and Prince Royal, which is used in Bavaria, Greece, Denmark, Saxony, Wurtemberg, and Sweden. The second is or was composed of Dauphin and Czarewitch. The third is the most numerous ; it comprises, or has comprised, our Prince of Wales, Prince of Orange, Prince of the Asturias, Duke of Brabant, Don N. of Alcantara (in Portugal), King of the Romans in the old German Empire, King of Rome in the first French Empire, Prince of Piedmont. Their brothers and sisters are separated in the same three fashions. The first division covers Austria, where they are Arch-Duchesses and Arch-Dukes, a title created by Frederic III. in 1453 ; Russia, where Grand is substituted for Arch ; Prussia, Denmark, and the smaller German States, where they simply add Prince or Princess to their names. The second class is limited to the Infants of Spain ; and if antiquity be a merit, it really is a pity that this title should now be temporarily suspended, for its age is great. Pelage, who lived in 1100, tells us that before his time the name of Infant was known in Aragon ; and in a charter of 1174, Alfonso of Castile calls his daughter Infantissa. The third group stretches into various geo-



graphy and many dukedoms : it includes York, Clarence, Cumberland, Sussex, Kent, and Edinburgh ; Orleans, Montpensier, Nemours, Chartres, Joinville, Bordeaux, and Aumale ; Oporto, Beja, and Braganza ; Genoa, Carignan, and Savoy ; Scania, Dalecarlia, Upland, and Ostrogothland ; Calabria and Rota ; and, after them, the Countships of Flanders and Hainault, and the Principality of Grand-Para in Brazil. There are a great many more besides, but it is scarcely necessary to recount them all. One addition that is perhaps worth making is, that there was a time when each son of the German Emperor was called “ Most Noble Purple-Born ” —*nobilissimus et purpuratus*. This sounds droll, because we are not accustomed to it ; but, in reality, it is not one atom more absurd than the Royal Dilection of three centuries ago, or the Serene Altitude of to-day. And yet, numerous as princes’ titles are, they are nothing compared to those of the sovereigns, their fathers ; for even if we add the Hereditary Grand-Dukes and the Hereditary German Princes, and allow largely for the unknown but possible appellations of the sons of Asiatic potentates, and even of those of African and American chiefs, we shall never get near the total of the names which European monarchs have bestowed upon themselves. The fountains of honour really seem to have comprehended honour, as some people are said to understand charity, and to have retained the larger part of it for themselves. There is not, however, the slightest objection to be made to this way of dealing with the glories of the earth, provided the fact be known and recognised. So long as glories are required — and in the present condition of society there is not the slightest indication of any

diminution of their necessity — it would be folly to complain because monarchs manifest so vigorous a desire for them. Indeed it may be urged that sovereigns increase the value of new titles in the eyes of their faithful subjects by the eagerness with which they claim them for themselves, and that they thereby contribute to the maintenance of the entire institution in an unweakening form.

All nations are absolutely alike in this one matter ; they unanimously agree that variousness of rank and of titular distinctions must be resolutely kept up. Monarchies and republics present no real difference on the question ; for, though the former monopolise the use of royal and noble appellations, the latter incontestably possess by far the largest share of general civil titles. We can calculate without any serious effort the number of British subjects who possess a nobiliary designation ; but the mind recoils from the attempt to count up the Honourables, the Generals, the Judges, and the Colonels who adorn the United States. America supplies, indeed, so singular an evidence of the effects of the love of titles in republics, that we are led on by it to suspect that radicalism, as soon as it becomes triumphant, will create a new nobility of its own in Europe ; and to conclude, from that apparent probability, amongst other reasons, that it will really not be worth while to make the change, and that we may just as well continue as we are. But the seeming certainty that no modification of form of government will exercise any effect on the multiplicity of decorative appellations, renders that multiplicity still more unworthy of our civilisation. The thirst for dignities indicates a state of mind of which no people have any reason to be

proud, either nationally or individually; and though Transatlantic democrats and European royalists struggle after them with equal appetite, that fact does not diminish the childish folly of the longing. And we cannot argue that our own responsibility is diminished because our rulers set us the example of running after gilded toys. It is no justification for our own vanity to urge that monarchs cover themselves with sounding names; that we find the same abundance of royal epithets wherever we turn our eyes; that there is not a Court in the Old World where titles do not exist—not a King in Christianity, not a Pacha in Africa or Asia, not a naked Chief of negroes, who does not call himself by an accumulated variety of ornamental denominations.

In one land only is there an exception. At 140° east there is a sovereign who considers that one description is sufficient to express all his greatness, who scorns all other designations as unworthy of his grandeur, who does not even condescend to possess a family name. It is true that this rare monarch has behind him five-and-twenty centuries of hereditary power; it is true that he is, in the eyes of his adoring people, Deity as well as King. But this extraordinary situation would have produced an absolutely contrary effect in Europe. If we had such a sovereign here, his predecessors would have invented new titles for themselves as each century went by, and he would, by this time, be proprietor of a collection far surpassing all that the world has seen. In Japan alone there exists a master who has held one unvarying rank since the time of Nebuchadnezzar; who would regard as a degradation any addition to the single quality by which more than a

hundred and twenty of his fathers have been known before him. The ruler of the empire of the Rising Sun may, however, be content with his solitary appellation, for it is far away the grandest which imperial pride has ever thought of. In old Japanese it is Soumela-Mikōto; but when Chinese characters were introduced into Japan the Chinese equivalent crept into use, and the monarch became known as Ten-o, which is the denomination he now bears. The meaning of the two words is identical—that meaning is “Heaven-Highest,” and that is the one title of the sovereign of Japan. No one will deny that it surpasses all our vain attempts at glory, and that King, Prince, and Emperor are poor indeed by the side of this superb invention. Mikado is not a title, though we use it as if it were; it signifies Royal Gate, and is merely a descriptive indication, just like Sublime Porte, of which, singularly enough, it is a far-Eastern repetition. In the mass of royalty, the Ten-o stands alone; alone he supplies to us the strange example of a rank which is itself and nothing else. No other similar case exists; and certainly the value of our own miserably recent variegated grades and names shrinks wofully when we see that the oldest, longest, and sole unbroken line of kings, which history has known—a line which began in 600 B.C.—has never changed its title. But though the successive representatives of this truly royal race have steadily repudiated all additional dignities for themselves, they have bestowed them in much variety on their subjects; and, indeed, have made up amply by their liberality in that direction for their resolute restriction towards themselves. Like the kings of Europe, the Ten-o is and has never ceased to be (the



Taicoon was nothing but a Viceroy) the fountain of honour to his people ; it is he who grants the sixteen degrees of rank of which his nobility is composed. So far, he is like any ordinary prince. But he preserves his vast advantages over Western sovereigns in the special faculty which he alone possesses of conferring the rank of Dai-djo Dai-djin, which (it is asserted that there is no doubt about it) used to deify its holder after death. It will be recognised that no other potentate exercises any power analogous to this ; and it is easy to understand that Kœmpfer should have declared, in his odd old book about Japan, that this grade was so terrifically sacred that the Ten-o always kept it for himself. This, however, is an error ; the reality is that the Ten-o never stooped to call himself a Dai-djo, because that dignity was beneath him, and that the title has been several times bestowed. It was once more granted, three years ago, to Sanjo, the actual prime minister. It still remains at an inaccessible elevation above all other grades ; but, sad as it is to own it, it cannot be denied that it has lat-

terly become completely human, and has lost its former remarkable privilege of god-making.

It is certainly unsatisfactory to discover, at the two ends of history, that Xerxes and the Ten-o offer indisputable examples of voluntary abstention from titular satisfactions ; while we Britons, like all other highly civilised populations, have spent the last thousand years in inventing, replacing, and renewing our royal adjectives and substantives. We have a fond conviction that we offer an example to the world ; and so perhaps we should, if the world consisted of nothing else but docks, cheap carpets, coal, green fields, and fair complexions : but in this particular element of royal titles, we ought to frankly own that we are not a model for other people ; that Japan is far more worth copying than we are ; and that we ought to hope that, in her present eagerness to Europeanise herself, she will be wise enough to make an exception in this one detail, and that her sovereign will continue to afford to us the spectacle of a ruler of thirty adoring millions who is simply "Heaven-Highest."

## THE BOOK OF CARLAVEROCK.

It seldom crosses the mind of the traveller, as he passes in rapid succession the old castles and halls of Scotland and England, that in every one of those dwelling-places there is a room or a closet, narrow and dim-lighted, specially devoted to the memory of those who have preceded the present tenants,—generation after generation passing away, like the leaves of a tree which perpetually renews its youth—but the written documents which defined their tenure of possession, and the domestic papers which chronicled their lives, stowed away in safety for preservation in the “charter-room” of the family—itsself too often as much a tomb as that in the neighbouring churchyard which enshrouds their dust. These repositories are ransacked from time to time, at long intervals—when some lawsuit or claim involving reference to the past occasions such disturbance—but have never been systematically explored till the present day. Their contents are often of priceless value to history.

Up to the close of the seventeenth century, history was written for the most part—except in such exceptional instances as those of De Thou or Clarendon—from the observation of current events by outsiders, with but little knowledge of the secret springs which impelled the performers in the drama. But with the commencement of the eighteenth, a new spirit arose in France and Italy, which extended itself to Britain. It was felt that history, to be trustworthy, must be founded on original documents, and that the immediate duty of the age was to accumulate such materials for the use of posterity. The great

compilation of Rymer led the way in England, and was followed by that of Anderson, on a smaller scale, in Scotland. That marvellous record of English topography and statistics, ‘Domesday-Book,’ was published by Government in 1783, and subsequently; and at the beginning of this century a Royal Commission was appointed for the systematic printing of the ancient records of the three kingdoms, the effect of which, so far as Scotland is concerned, was the publication of the Acts of Parliament at full length, of the Scottish Rolls preserved in the Tower, and of various other volumes of great importance. The result achieved was small as compared with the work to be done; but what was published is invaluable. A series, of parallel importance, was commenced by private enterprise, when, in 1823, a number of Scottish gentlemen formed themselves into the Bannatyne Club, under the auspices of Sir Walter Scott, for the printing of the chartularies of the old Scottish monasteries and religious establishments, chronicles, correspondence, and other materials for national history existing in manuscript. The Maitland, Abbotsford, and Spalding Clubs—and the too short-lived Iona, for whose solitary volume Mr W. Forbes Skene and Mr Gregory contributed such valuable materials towards the illustration of the Celtic half of Scottish history—were successively formed in friendly rivalry; and the results consist in a precious series of volumes embodying an untold amount of historical matter illustrating the annals of Scotland—political, genealogical, and do-



mestic — during many centuries. The names of Thomas Thomson, of Robert Pitcairn, of W. B. Turnbull, and of the lamented Joseph Robertson; and, among the survivors, of Mr Stevenson, of Dr David Laing, Dr John Stuart, and of Professor Cosmo Innes,—are, to name no others, imperishably linked with these undertakings. We say nothing of the many works of the highest importance—some in the form of “collectanea,” others illustrating special departments of this one subject—which have been produced by individual antiquaries from the days of Sir James Dalrymple to the present time. Space will not permit it; and our present concern is, with but one exception, conjunct labour, and with that only so far as it includes Scotland more or less directly within its scope. The latest development of this systematised labour may be said to have commenced when Lord Romilly, the late Master of the Rolls, planned the series of Calendars of the State Papers preserved in the public archives, and of which about eighty volumes have now appeared,—the series of unpublished or imperfectly edited British historians, and which has now reached its hundred and thirty-first volume,—and the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts recently appointed for the purpose of examining (with the permission of the owners) the MSS. existing in the private charter-rooms above spoken of, as well as in libraries and collections which have a *quasi*-public character, and reporting upon such as are of importance to historical science. The invitation has been responded to with patriotic alacrity on both sides of the Tweed and in Ireland; and we have now the three first Reports before us, sufficiently attesting the importance of the search and the interest of the discoveries. Of these it may be enough to say, that from one repository alone

in England (Lord Winchelsea’s), thirteen chestsful of venerable parchments were disinterred, which had evidently remained undisturbed for generations, and in which no less than fifteen charters of the Anglo-Saxon kings, dating from the eighth to the eleventh century, and nearly two thousand ranging between the Conquest and the close of the fourteenth century, were discovered, mixed up with comparatively recent deeds, letters, and miscellaneous papers of no importance. Other “finds,” although less rich, have been equally unexpected; and all have their enduring value. It is to be hoped that the process thus auspiciously begun will be generally seconded and actively prosecuted; for the number of these treasuries of the past is daily diminished by neglect, fire, and other casualties. The reports upon the Scottish repositories are (with the exception of some notices by Mr Stevenson) from the pens of the inspectors for the Historical MSS. Commission in Scotland, Dr John Stuart, Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (whose great work, the ‘Sculptured Stones of Scotland,’ published by the Spalding Club, has done such service to national and comparative archæology), and Mr William Fraser, the learned author of the work which stands at the head of this article, and to which, after a brief enumeration of his other compilations of a similar nature, we propose now to invite the attention of our readers.

While the Government on a large, and the Clubs on a lesser scale, have been occupied thus usefully in unsealing the fountains of history, it occurred to various proprietors of Scottish charter-rooms that it would be wise to place the most interesting of their family papers beyond the reach of accident by printing them *verbatim*, with such genealogical and historical memoirs prefixed

to them as might illustrate their bearing, and, with the aid afforded by public and other collateral records, transmit the annals of their houses in an authentic form to posterity. The conception, as gradually developed, differed from that of the great French genealogists of the seventeenth century, whose "preuves" are selected for the purpose of supporting assertions—usually, it must be allowed, warranted by the evidence; whereas in the present case the documents of importance were to be all printed, and the historical narrative checked and governed by them. Mr Fraser was peculiarly qualified by long familiarity with such studies to carry the purpose through; and Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, himself (it is needless to say) an accomplished antiquary, was fortunate enough to secure his assistance on behalf of his own paternal house, so noted in Scottish history. 'The Stirlings of Keir and their Family Papers' appeared accordingly in 1858. The "sacred flame," once awakened, spread from one old Scottish castle to another; and the result has been a magnificent series of quarto volumes, in which the personal history and leading title-deeds, charters, state-papers, and correspondence, public and private, of the great houses of Montgomery Earl of Eglintoun, Maxwell of Pollock, and Colquhoun, in the west; of the Carnegies Earls of Southesk, and the Stewarts of Grandtully, in the north; and now, and latest, of the Maxwells Earls of Nithsdale, and Lords Herries, in the south,—have been preserved for futurity. These works have not been published, but circulated among the friends of the respective families, and a certain number of copies placed (we believe) in public libraries for reference, or presented to gentlemen of antiquarian pursuits. No cost has been spared in

their preparation and production. They are richly illustrated with fac-similes of charters and letters, engravings of seals (a very important department of archæology), of monuments, family residences, and portraits; while the ancient documents themselves are printed with scrupulous accuracy, and the personal memoirs are drawn up with freedom and impartiality. The interest of such records cannot be overrated. Even when not dealing with public events of the first magnitude, they exhibit the form and pressure of the times with the distinctness of a photograph; and teach us continually that most precious and ennobling lesson to the human heart—sympathy with the distant and the past.

The history of the Maxwells of Nithsdale, who form the subject of this last of Mr Fraser's compilations, is linked throughout with that of their country; but it has a peculiar interest for the western borders, where the family have been established since their first migration to Scotland, and for the history of which these volumes supply a mass of new information. Powerful magnates in that quarter before the war of independence, their power became, to a certain extent, overshadowed by that of the Douglasses after the rise of that family under Robert Bruce; but they recovered all they had lost, and more, after the extinction of the elder or Black Douglasses in the fifteenth, and the depression of the younger or Red branch in the sixteenth century. They had numerous and brave clansmen, allies, and followers, and were always ready to support their sovereigns when the question was war with England, although they gave them no small trouble at other times. But subsequently to the Reformation, and during the troubles under the Commonwealth, and after



the Revolution, they were steady friends to the Crown—or to those who claimed to wear it—Queensmen, Cavaliers, and Jacobites to the last. In the course of their history it fell to their lot to defend their strong and princely castle of Carlawerock on two occasions at the command of their kings: on the first, successfully, against the English on behalf of Bruce in 1312; on the second, in behalf of Charles I. against the Covenanters in 1640—unsuccessfully indeed, but surrendering only after a prolonged resistance of thirteen weeks. A parallel fact can hardly be cited, involving such an interval of time, and in respect to one and the same fortress, from the annals of any other Scottish family.

Three, or rather four personages stand out with especial prominence in these volumes,—viz., John Lord Herries, the faithful champion of Mary Queen of Scots; his nephew John, eighth Lord Maxwell, and the son and heir of the latter, John the ninth Lord (both of them Earls of Morton during the eclipse of the Douglasses of Dalkeith, but whom we shall style for convenience by their more familiar title), and under whom the well-known feud between the Maxwells and Johnstones rose to its climax and expired; and Winifred Herbert, Countess of Nithsdale, the heroic but thoroughly womanly wife of William the fifth Earl, who planned and accomplished her husband's escape from the Tower after his condemnation to death for his share in the insurrection of 1715. The history of Lord Herries is sufficiently known, and Lady Nithsdale's character is familiar to us through her letter to her sister, narrating her husband's escape; but our space will not allow us to do more than touch on the great Maxwell and Johnstone feud, which Mr Fraser has now placed before us for the first time in its completeness by the collation of private

and public documents; although we must of course hope for still further light from the Johnstone or Annandale archives, should such in course of time become accessible.

It can hardly be necessary to remind the Scottish reader that while the Maxwells ruled in Nithsdale the Johnstones held nearly equal power in Annandale, and that a constant personal rivalry and a rooted opposition of character and political sentiment marked the two families. The Maxwells adhered (as we have stated) to what are now termed Conservative ideas, the Johnstones to Liberal,—for the two parties were as clearly defined then as now. The proximate question of dispute turned invariably on the possession of the Wardenship of the Western Marches, an office of immense influence, and which the Maxwells claimed as a sort of hereditary right, and usually held when partisans (more or less avowed) of the elder religion and the old French alliance were in power, but were as certainly deprived of, as a matter of course, when the doctrines of the newer world got the ascendancy—as they did, in fact, more and more towards the close of the sixteenth century. The great feud—if it were not more correct to term it a war—began in earnest in 1584, and may be said to have terminated in 1613; and the drama falls naturally into three distinct acts, each contributing its catastrophe. It began, not through the love but the pride, apparently, of a woman.

In 1584, Captain James Stuart, the upstart Earl of Arran, the unworthy favourite of James VI., was in the zenith of his power. He had acquired the barony of Kinneil by the forfeiture of the Hamiltons, and wished to exchange it with Lord Maxwell for that of Mearns and other property, part of the Maxwell patrimony. Lord Maxwell declined; and in order to coerce him, Stuart

prevailed on Lady Johnstone, wife of Sir John of that ilk, Lord Maxwell's rival, and who was then at Court, to induce her husband to accept the provostship of Dumfries, which was vacant. He did so; but Lord Maxwell, who viewed it as an affront to himself and his family, occupied the town with his forces, prevented the entrance of Johnstone, and obtained his own election. Sir John complained to Stuart and the Privy Council. Maxwell was denounced as a rebel—ordered to surrender himself prisoner at the Castle of Blackness under pain of treason—the Wardenship of the Western Marches was conferred on Johnstone—all Lord Maxwell's fortified castles were to be surrendered within twenty-four hours, and all his friends to appear before the new warden and give security for loyal obedience under pain of rebellion. Along with these orders Stuart sent two companies of horse to support Johnstone, but Maxwell intercepted and defeated them. Mutual raids followed between the two clans, in the most important of which, the Maxwells, under a brother of the chief, burnt the castle of Lochwood, the chief stronghold of the Johnstones, boasting that he would give Lady Johnstone light enough "to set her hood by;" while at the same time Lord Maxwell besieged the Tower of Bonshaw, the old seat of the Irvines, and which was held out by Sir John Johnstone in person, with cannon, and had brought it to extremity, when Lord Scrope, the English warden, intervened as mediator, and effected a composition between them. The Tower was surrendered, and Johnstone appears to have gone free; but his proud spirit chafed so under the discomfiture, that he died of grief shortly afterwards, in 1586. Beyond empty proclamations, the Government attempted nothing more for the time against the Maxwells; and thus ter-

minated the first act in the drama, the Johnstones remaining in legal and confirmed possession of the wardenship, but deprived of their chief. Lochwood, the fortress of the Johnstones, could hardly have been captured except by practised Borderers: it stood in the centre of an almost inaccessible morass, which induced King James to exclaim when he saw it a few years afterwards, that the man who built it there must have been a thief in his heart.

Some years now elapsed, during which Sir James Johnstone, the son and heir of the elder laird, and a brave and able man, occupied himself in strengthening his position, renewing the alliance with his hereditary friends the Jardines, and otherwise. The fall of Arran, in which Lord Maxwell was a chief actor, and his re-establishment in the wardenship, threatened to reawaken the struggle; but it was postponed for a time by the efforts of King James, who at length brought the enemies to a formal agreement and reconciliation in 1592. It was not destined to be of long duration. In the succeeding year a party of Johnstones, headed by the Laird of Wamphray, invaded the territories of the Crichtons, who appealed to Lord Maxwell, as Warden of the March, and to the King and Privy Council, for redress. Fifteen poor widows, carrying as many bloody shirts which had been worn by their slaughtered relatives, accompanied the deputation, and paraded the streets of Edinburgh. The people were roused to compassion, and demanded vengeance; and the King and Council ordered Lord Maxwell to do justice on the offenders. The neighbouring barons and others who had suffered wrong from similar oppression on the part of the Johnstones and their allies, engaged themselves to Lord Maxwell on this occasion by a bond of friendship and man-



rent to support his authority. The existence of this bond came to the knowledge of Sir James Johnstone, who immediately took measures to repel the threatened attack. The Scotts of Buccleuch, the Elliots of Liddesdale, and the Armstrongs of the Debatable Land, all took part with him—Buccleuch in particular contributing five hundred men. The two armies met on the sands near the point where the river Dryfe falls into the Annan; but the tactics of Sir James Johnstone proved superior to those of his enemy. He took up a position on the slope of a rising ground, with the river in front, where Maxwell, if he crossed and attacked him, could only do so under the disadvantage of being unable to employ more than half his men. The latter crossed, notwithstanding, confident in his superiority, but found himself in face of an enemy having the advantage of position, with his own troops in disorder, and, in short, obliged either to fight or fly. While he paused for a moment, Johnstone sent forward a detachment of prickers to provoke him to combat, shouting his slogan, "Ready, aye ready!" to which Maxwell replied by throwing forward a similar party, whose cry of "Wardlaw! I bid ye bide, Wardlaw!" bespoke defiance. But these last were instantly surrounded by numbers; some were taken and others slain; and the remainder fell back on the main body and threw the whole into confirmed confusion and flight. Lord Maxwell was slain in the pursuit—some say by Sir James Johnstone himself, some by Johnstone of Kirkhill, who cut off his hand; some by the wife of the latter, who had come to the field to succour the wounded, and found him bleeding to death, and dashed out his brains with the heavy keys she wore at her girdle. But these traditions rest on no sufficient authority, and all that is affirmed

by contemporary evidence is that he was slain, and his head and right hand cut off and carried as a trophy to Lochwood. Before the battle, Maxwell, it is said, had offered a "ten-pound land" as reward to any one who would bring him his rival's head or hand, and the challenge thus fearfully recoiled against himself. The place where he fell was long known by two trees named in tradition "Lord Maxwell's thorns," but which were swept away by an inundation of the Dryfe about fifty years ago. Many of the fugitives were pursued by the Johnstones as far as Lockerby, where the severity of their wounds originated the proverbial expression of "a Lockerby lick." Lord Maxwell was still in the prime of life, only forty years old. Archbishop Spotswood describes him as "a man of great spirit, humane, courteous, and more learned than noblemen usually are. His fall was pitied of many, for that he was not known" (rather a negative merit) "to have done much wrong in his time, and was rather hurtful to himself than others." The Battle of Dryfe Sands, as it is called, was fought on the 6th of December 1593.

The third and last act in this tragical history, in which the mature Sir James Johnstone and the young Lord Maxwell, the son and heir of Lord John, are the principal performers, begins with the year 1608, but was prefaced, as in an interlude, by a series of minor struggles between the two clans. Lord Herries, Sir James Johnstone, Lord Ochiltree (as an impartial statesman, attached to neither party), and finally, Sir James Johnstone once more, were successively appointed Wardens of the Western Marches during the interval; and it would seem that the Johnstones' rule was arbitrary and oppressive, and such as the Maxwells and their friends could ill brook. But James VI. and the Privy Council were con-

stantly labouring in the beneficent task of bringing the various feuds which distracted the country to peaceable accommodation; and a reconciliation was once more effected between the families in 1605, when Lord Maxwell executed what were called "Letters of Slains," by which he formally forgave the Laird of Johnstone the slaughter of his father. Nothing is more striking, we may observe, than the intermixture of bloodshed and legal composition or atonement—"assythement" is the ancient word for it in the feudal jurisprudence of Scotland—which reminds us at every page of our criminal trials of the feuds in Iceland, and subsequent arbitrations at the Thing, as recorded, for example, in the 'Nials-Saga,' so admirably translated by Mr Dasent. The *quasi*-legality then attaching to the blood-feud, is incidentally illustrated during this very interval, when, on the 7th March 1600, Lord Herries, in subscribing a renunciation of his personal share in the feud, reserves his duty of blood and friendship to his chief, which reservation was duly admitted by the king. It is difficult to believe that the young Lord Maxwell could have thus foregone his claim to vengeance, except under pressure; but he may have shared in the better feelings rapidly growing up among the younger generation; and what took place afterwards is susceptible, we think, of an interpretation less harsh than the law and the Privy Council affixed to it. This reconciliation of 1605 was shortly afterwards followed by a mandate commanding him to enter himself as prisoner in the castle of Leith, as suspected of Popery; and a challenge to the Earl of Morton to decide certain differences between them as to jurisdiction by single combat, was punished by his arrest and imprisonment in the castle of Edinburgh. He made his escape, and took refuge in the fortresses of

his own country, where a cavern which he tenanted is still called "Lord Maxwell's Cave."

Under the adverse circumstances just related, overtures were made to him by Sir James Johnstone for a permanent reconciliation. The intermediary was Sir Robert Maxwell of Spotts, who had married Johnstone's sister, and was well affected to both parties, although Lord Maxwell treated him with coldness in consequence of his alliance with the hostile clan. It was arranged that Lord Maxwell and Sir James should meet and confer, each with a single attendant, near the house of Beal, on Wednesday the 6th of April 1608, Sir Robert to act as mediator. Sir Robert, who undertook the commission with reluctance, exacted an oath from both barons that neither should commit any act of violence, whether the conference ended in a reconciliation or not. The details of the meeting are given from contemporary authority with the minuteness of an eye and ear witness. Lord Maxwell was attended by Charles Maxwell, brother of the Laird of Kirkhouse, and Sir James by William Johnstone of Lockerby. Charles was a man of hasty temper, and Sir Robert augured ill from his appearance on the field. The two chiefs met, and saluting each other courteously, rode forward together, Sir Robert riding between them. Charles Maxwell and Lockerby had been ordered to remain apart, under apprehension of that violence on the part of subordinates which so frequently under parallel circumstances defeated the intention of principals. But, disobeying his orders, Charles Maxwell left his post, and approaching Lockerby, said, "If I had known of this tryste, Lord Maxwell neither could nor should have brought me here." "I hope in God, Charles," replied Lockerby, "ye shall not rue of your coming here; for these two noblemen have



been long at variance, and I hope now they shall agree." "The Laird of Johnstone is not able," rejoined Charles, "to make amends for the great skaith and injury he hath done to us." To which Lockerby replied, soothingly, "The Laird will do to his power to satisfy Lord Maxwell and his friends." But Charles continued to provoke him by bitter words, and at last drew a pistol and fired at him. The bullet passed through Lockerby's cloak. He cried "Treason!" and aimed at Charles, but the pistol missed fire. Lord Maxwell, hearing the shots, was about to turn back, when Sir Robert seized him by the cloak, exclaiming, "Fie, my lord! make not yourself a traitor and me baith!" To which Maxwell replied, "I am wyteless" (*i. e.*, blameless); and then seeing Sir James Johnstone "stealing away" (as it is expressed) to support his follower, and shaking off Sir Robert's grasp, he rode quickly after him, fired at him with his pistol, and mortally wounded him. Sir James fell to the ground, exclaiming, "Lord, have mercy on me! Christ, have mercy on me! I am deceived,"—and almost immediately afterwards expired. Lord Maxwell, who had turned his horse back after firing the fatal shot, paused, looking on—it is not difficult to imagine with what mingled emotion—while the faithful Lockerby was supporting his dying chief. He was preparing to go when Charles cried, "My lord, will ye ride away and leave this bloody thief behind you?"—meaning Lockerby. "What reck of him!" said Maxwell—"as if," observes Mr Fraser, "his thirst for blood had been slaked by the death of the slayer of his father"—"for the other has enough." Then they rode away together.

It must be added that that very day Lord Maxwell granted a charter of lands to Charles Maxwell in reward for many faithful and gratuit-

ous services. It has a suspicious appearance, but does not necessarily imply foul play. The event was wholly against Lord Maxwell's interest, and we have little doubt that the crime was unpremeditated. The presence of various gentlemen as witnesses to the charter suggests that it was signed in the morning. The interview and its disastrous termination took place between three and four in the afternoon.

Lord Maxwell escaped to France, where he remained for some years. Meanwhile he was tried, condemned, and forfeited in absence, in 1609, for treason, murder under assurance (and, it is charged, by poisoned bullets, for which there is not a shadow of support), and on other counts; and his lands were bestowed on others. His flight and the occasion of it are commemorated in the well-known, beautiful, and contemporary ballad, familiar to us as "Lord Maxwell's Good-Night."

Wearied of exile he returned to Scotland without the king's licence, and at the certain risk of his life, in March 1612. He was hunted like a wild beast, and, broken in health and hopeless of escape, determined to make his way, if possible, to Sweden. His kinsman, George, Earl of Caithness, with unexampled infamy—if a story so black and without any adequate motive can be credited—offered him shelter and assistance towards that object; and, after getting him into his power, imprisoned and betrayed him to the Government. He was brought by ship from Thurso to Edinburgh, and warded in the common jail in September of the same year.

The last scene of the last act was now at hand. On the news of Lord Maxwell's arrest and arrival in Edinburgh, Sir James, the young heir of Johnstone, with his mother and grandmother—this last being the now aged woman whose rash subservience to the designs of Arran

may be said to have originated the feud—came up to Edinburgh to press for his execution, the elder lady being so feeble and weak that she could not appear before the Privy Council in person, but was examined by commission. Offers were made on the part of the Maxwells to the Privy Council, praying that they might be communicated through the ministers of religion to the Johnstones, towards an appeasement of the strife between them; but there is no proof that they were forwarded, — the intention was to carry the sentence already pronounced into effect; and there can be little doubt that the opportunity of crushing a house so powerful on the Borders, and professing the Roman Catholic faith, was too favourable to be overlooked. He was beheaded on the 21st of May 1613, meeting death as a brave man, acknowledging the justice of his sentence, asking pardon of Johnstone, his mother, and grandmother, for the wrong he had done them by the slaughter of father, husband, child; but repudiating any “dishonour or infamy” as attaching to him in the eye of man, although not excusing himself in the presence of God. None of the ministers attended him; he declined their services, dying, as he had lived, a Roman Catholic. He had been born in strife and nurtured in convulsion, and his end was bitterness—thus dying an ignominious death, a young man, though old in suffering, only twenty-six years of age.

This great feud terminated thus; for although outbreaks witnessed to the fires beneath for many years afterwards, they never broke into serious violence; and the peaceable character of Lord John’s brother and successor, Robert tenth Lord Maxwell and first Earl of Nithsdale (who brought another hereditary feud, that with the Murrays of Cockpool, to a peaceful composition),

and that too of the son and heir of the latter, Earl Robert, surnamed “the Philosopher,” tended to repress excesses. On the death of Earl Robert without issue, the next younger branch, the Lords Herries, who had always been temperately inclined, succeeded to the earldom; and by the close of the century, the feudal enmities which once animated the families of Scotland had for the most part—especially in the case of those of the Cavalier type—been absorbed and effaced under the overwhelming tide of political suffering.

It is not, however, our purpose to dwell on the story of the Maxwells, as told by Mr Fraser, further than to say that, after the death of the forfeited Earl and his son, the daughter of the latter, styled by courtesy Lady Winifred after her high-minded grandmother, carried the estate in marriage to a younger son of the ancient and distinguished house of Haggerstone-Constable in Northumberland and Yorkshire, whose grandson William Constable-Maxwell obtained a reversal of the attainder of the lordship of Herries in 1848, and a recognition of his right to that dignity in 1858. It was by the younger brother of Lord Herries, the late Marmaduke Constable-Maxwell of Terreagles, that the idea was projected which has been so ably carried out by Mr Fraser in the ‘Book of Carlawerock.’ An interesting memoir of this gentleman is given in the preface to the work. We learn, too, with interest, that the late venerable Earl of Traquair dying childless, and without any near relative except his aged sister, herself likewise childless, bequeathed his estates, after her death, to the Maxwells of Terreagles. His ancestor, the Earl of Traquair of 1715, had married Earl William’s sister, and the families have ever been closely allied in the remembrance of this



bond of consanguinity, of mutual good offices, and of a common religious faith.

Mr Fraser's narrative closes fittingly with a memorial of the late Mr Maxwell of Terraughty, who, on the death of the son of Earl William, became the heir-male of the family, and whose life, lengthened to the patriarchal age of ninety-three, and closing in 1814, had witnessed marvellous changes not merely in the political world, but in the manners and rural economy of Scotland. Three years before his death he wrote a very interesting letter, printed by Mr Fraser, enumerating some of these changes,—the period of general distress to the poorer classes coincident with the failure of the South Sea Company, and the introduction of the feeding of black cattle, and which lasted from 1720 to 1735; the partial relief brought in 1725 by the importation of potatoes from Ireland into the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, from whence they were carried to Edinburgh on horseback and sold by pounds and ounces; the improvement in husbandry in the south-west of Scotland, first undertaken by the young Laird of Arbigland,—and other matters; to which Mr Fraser adds the facts, as showing the rise in the value of property, that the patrimonial estate of Terraughty, which Mr Maxwell bought back in 1754, after it had passed for a time into other hands, for £886, was worth £500 a-year at his death; and that the small farm of Halmyre, for which he paid £80, was when he purchased it let for £3, 6s. 8d.; that he lived to let it on lease at £80 *per annum*; and that it was sold soon after his death by his executors for £2000. "Old Terraughty," as he was commonly

called, left a son, who died without issue; and Mr Maxwell of Curruchan then became the senior heir-male collateral of the house of Nithsdale.

Besides Mr Marmaduke Constable-Maxwell, Mr Fraser commemorates, in a few touching lines appended to his preface, many others of the clan—chivalrous, learned, genial, and good—who sympathised with his labours, but are now no more—"all swept away, but all leaving pleasant Maxwell memories." He has associated himself with them henceforward by his record of their "eminently loyal house, the history of which," he concludes, "for upwards of seven centuries, I have here laboured faithfully to record;" but we trust he may himself be spared to do much and similar service in the special field which he so ably occupies.

The services of the historical antiquary to literature are but little known to the general public: he labours in silence and in love, with but slender remuneration even when in an official position; while his chief reward is the consciousness of promoting the progress of the science to which he has devoted his life, and the sympathy of the restricted circle within which the leaders of inquiry in each particular department of archæology are welcomed as brethren. But the position of Mr Fraser is so far different, that the fruits of his labour, in the present field at least, can become known to but few even within that circle. It is for this reason—and because we think that a wider audience may be interested in these labours—that we have commended them, by the one sample now selected, to the appreciation of the public.

## DISORDER IN DREAMLAND.

DREAMS and portents are not so gravely considered in the present day as they were in times past. Until these latter ages, nothing of moment was undertaken without previous reference to an augur, an oracle, or a divinity directly, the practice being common to most religions—sanctioned in the true, followed in the others. The answers to human appeals to divinities came often by means of visions or dreams, and many times mysterious communications of this kind were made without a question having been previously asked. The world quite believed that the visions seen during sleep had meanings, although it was only now and then that a meaning could be discerned. We have changed all that now. We dream as men in all ages have dreamed, but we do not allow that our visions have the least significance. The trust of these utilitarian times reposes on something more tangible than weird revelations. If we desire to invest or realise money, our broker is likely to take the place of the augur or aruspex; our solicitor is the oracle when property is in question; we turn to the physician and not to the priest when disease troubles us; if we venture on journeys we look to the fitness and security of the conveyance—no, we place ourselves, in a majority of instances, at the mercy of railway companies, less worthy to be relied on than the most impudent soothsayer, or the trance of the silliest old woman. At any rate, whether we risk our lives and fortunes rashly or cautiously, we work by natural means; neither would any educated person among us own to a belief that other means are available—*own*, it was written; for it may be shrewdly suspected that nine-tenths

of us have, in some secret corners of our being, lying *perdu*, an implicit conviction that there are agencies other than material which affect our fates and fortunes. More than this, the man is quite an exceptional being who has not in his own experience known of warnings and revelations which no philosophy can explain—curious coincidences he will call them, probably, when jauntily making mention of them; but how is it with him when he is alone and reflecting? Can he maintain the doctrine of accident then? Is there not some inexplicable connection between signs and events which forces the belief that both have been guided by influences very different from those with which we are physically acquainted?

If only I were assured that my readers would confess the consciousness which I have indicated, I would ask them to take with me a step in advance of this position, and to consider whether, in some of the spiritual phenomena which they have witnessed, there have not been evidences, not only of intention and connection, but also of occasional strange misdirections or erratic flights of the omens, which have rendered them practically useless, or even mischievous, without making them less remarkable. Dreams and tokens sometimes appear to make mistakes, just as human beings do. They come at times to the wrong house or the wrong man, although there is generally some obvious explanation of the error, just as there might be of some blunder in everyday affairs. I give an instance to illustrate my meaning. A gentleman, an acquaintance of mine, being at the time in one of our northern cities, dreamed once that he saw his eldest son



lying on the ground, severely injured by some accident; and that his family surgeon, appearing in the scene, informed him that the boy had been kicked by a donkey, and that the injury would prove fatal. He awoke much disturbed, but had not time in the morning to ponder his dream, for he was going to Newcastle by an early train. Many times during the journey the frightful vision presented itself again; but he travelled on business of importance, the thought of which detained his mind in the actual world. It was not till he was returning home again in the evening that the vision of the night before came back to him with distressing effect. He travelled the last twenty miles of the return journey in a truly miserable state of mind, unable to shake off the fear of something terrible, which impended over his first-born. As the train drew up to the platform he caught sight of the surgeon, standing as if expecting the arrival of some one; but he did not see any member of his own family waiting, as was usual, his return. In an instant he put together the circumstances of the case. Something shocking had occurred at home; and the surgeon had come to meet him, and to prepare him for the miserable condition in which he would find his house. When the train drew up to the platform he could see nothing of the family surgeon — and he even doubted whether he might not have mistaken some one else for him; and when he arrived at home he found a happy party, and nothing the matter. They had supposed that he would travel by a later train, or else he would have been met at the station as usual. No misfortune happened in the family; but about this time a schoolfellow and class-fellow of his eldest son fell seriously ill. His case perplexed the medical

men, who, unable to recognise the complaint as a defined disease, began to make inquiries as to incautious trials of his strength, or accidental injury. Then it came out that the boy had been kicked in the side by a donkey soon after the time when the dream was dreamed. It was decided that some serious internal injury had been the result of the kick; and when the poor lad died (as he did) this was put beyond a doubt. Now, does not this story suggest that the dream was intended (perhaps as a caution) for some relation of the boy who died, but that it came, or was conducted, to the parent of that boy's class-fellow; as if, when the boys were together in school, the dream had been ordered to proceed to the father of "that boy" (pointed out); but a mistake having been made as to which boy was indicated, the warning found its way to the father of the wrong one?

If these curious occurrences seem to give much significance to dreams, they at the same time betray a most unfortunate laxity in the machinery by which dreams are directed. Are the agents who bring about these visions subject to the same feelings and infirmities as the ministers and stewards of this world? Is it possible that an intelligence, charged with the communication of a dream, can be heedless enough to deliver it at the wrong house like a stupid postman? Can it get sleepy over its work, and let the dreams distribute themselves any way they will, so that it is quit of the bother of them? Is any sort of stimulus resorted to by spirits that have a good deal to do, and may be of a desponding tendency? Or, worse than all, is there a spiritual equivalent to a half-crown, by which, out of wantonness or malignity, dream-conductors may be induced to make wilful blunders after the fashion of knavish valets or intri-

guing handmaidens in comedies? My own opinion is that the Queen Mabs, or whoever they are, that manage the dream-world, are sometimes a little flighty, and in consequence create terrible *contretemps* among material beings. This much having been said by way of preface, it will be understood in what way I regard the untoward events narrated below. Some spirit, or spirits, was, or were, guilty of very grave and culpable negligence. I am afraid we have at present no means of bringing the delinquent or delinquents to punishment, but we may record a verdict in case of their ever becoming amenable to correction, so I beg my readers to consider the case well, and to say whether a conviction can be avoided.

It happened about fifty years ago that among the guests who one night occupied the Royal Hotel at Plymouth, were two young men, who, not being friends nor even acquaintances, were both then resident in a small town in Devonshire, which shall be called in this narrative Wetton, as if the name were a contraction of Wet Town, an appellation which the place well deserved. They had come to Plymouth, each on his own affairs, but they chanced to occupy adjacent rooms, and they had good reason to remember these rooms, as I propose to show; but before I say what happened, just let me mention who the young men were.

One of them was a subaltern officer temporarily employed on the recruiting service. Lieutenant Hardinge had been some few months at Wetton, which place he found very dull, although, to do it justice, it did its little endeavour to amuse him, and make him think favourably of it. Perhaps he appreciated the modest attentions which were paid to him, for he was not a supercilious person

at all; but if he did, that was no reason why he should not make an excuse for running into the large town now and then to see another phase of life, and to hear what was going on in the military world.

The other was a native of Wetton, the son of a tradesman who had, I believe, been a working mason, but had now risen to be an employer of labour, and a master builder in a small way. The father, though shrewd, upright, and industrious—which qualities had enabled him to rise in the world—felt the want of education when he came to fill a new position. He could not correspond with educated people, and he could not keep his business accounts—at least not in a manner that could be generally understood. It is true that he used certain cabalistic signs which he would scrawl in devious fashion over the pages of a memorandum-book; but these hieroglyphics were understood by none but himself, and a schoolmaster at Wetton,—a very useful person, who for moderate fees made fair abstracts from the mysterious memoranda, and periodically prepared the bills of Mr Saunders (that was the builder's name). Of course Mr Saunders did what he could to prevent his son from suffering from the defect which he had himself found so detrimental. He intended the youth to succeed him in his business, and so had him well grounded by his friend the schoolmaster in the three R's, and made, as he called it, "a bit of a scholar." He had, moreover, supplemented this instruction with a year's board and teaching at a private school in Plymouth. If the quality of education given at the boarding-school did not surpass that which was procurable at Wetton, Mr Saunders senior never for an instant imagined that such could be the case. He



did his duty by paying the price of good schooling at any rate; and then the polish acquired by going from a country town to a large town for a short time! Young Master Saunders came home burnished to a high degree, greatly to his father's pride in a general way, who would wink at his neighbours or his wife when the lively young fellow indulged in a smart sally or showed his breeding, as much as to say, "There's mettle for ye: you see the flavour has been properly brought out of vintage number two; number one didn't get a fair chance, but he's got it in him too." At the same time, Saunders senior owned to himself, like a reasonable, moderate man as he was, that there were some little features of Benjamin's spirit which he didn't altogether appreciate; "but then," he would say, "if I had wanted the boy to be entirely after my fancies I should have kept him at home and not made him a scholar; with eddication come ideas which homely men can't quite understand. If Ben's got a little above me that can't be helped; there's a great deal about the lad that pleases me, and, for the rest, we must take the rough and the smooth together." Honest Saunders had a strong belief, too, that a little steady attention to business would tone the youth down to the right pitch; and that, when he should be out of his time, he would possess just the proportions of science, practical knowledge, and acquaintance with the world, for "getting on," as it is called, in the orb aforesaid. Accordingly he apprenticed Benjamin to himself; and if he had made him go through the whole drudgery of the business as he had himself done, it might have been that things would have turned out as he anticipated. But he showed a rather injudicious respect to the youth's learning and refined feelings. He hadn't

the heart to set so genteel an apprentice to mix mortar in his shirt-sleeves, or to handle his trowel among a set of uncouth, uneducated journeymen who could be no company for him; besides, he wanted these journeymen to look up to Master Benjamin as a superior person, which they might not be inclined to do if they should see him dressed in fustian, and sweating away like an ordinary mechanic. The consequence was that the young Benjamin acquired only a theoretic knowledge of the building trade; and that he was more in the office among the books and letters than on the works; and, as a consequence of this consequence, he learned to look down upon manual labour, and to encourage ambitious ideas which were not likely to make him steady. I don't mean to say, however, that Benjamin didn't mind his work. He did that, and by taking charge of the office affairs enabled his parent to be almost constantly supervising the workmen, and often, as he liked to do, laying a course of masonry himself "to show these conceited scamps how a bit of work should be done," finishing a joint or two, setting a grate or boiler, or spreading a coat of cement.

Now the young Benjamin, as he wore a coat of finer cloth than his father's, as he was esteemed by his mother, and indeed by many less prejudiced people, a person of erudition, and as he felt within him an aptitude for asserting himself vigorously on most occasions (or, according to some, as he was a pert young whelp), began to seek a society somewhat more elevated than that in which his family moved. He was on intimate terms with the three or four attorneys' clerks, with the young man at the bank, with an incipient druggist (afterwards a bankrupt with a copper dividend) who had come down to put a little

life into the place, and to take the conceit out of that old buffer, dear old Mr Mannah; with a few choice selections from behind the drapers' counters; and, above all, with the sergeant-major of the disembodied militia, a quiet and inoffensive but idle man, who, however, under this modest exterior concealed a most impetuous and adventurous character, as he allowed to be perceived sometimes, by his conversation, when he was three parts drunk and off his guard. As his person was not bad-looking, Ben decorated it after the fashion affected by youths of his disposition: he was much given to chains; he wore a many-coloured scarf round his neck with two immense pins stuck therein; his waistcoats were gorgeously patterned; his hat was worn with a peculiar knowing cock, and his hair underneath it was studiously larded and curled. A pretty fellow, some people thought him; women, here and there, no doubt, admired him; he superstitiously believed that he could vanquish the whole sex.

Benjamin had gone to Plymouth to look after some materials which were required at Wetton. He had finished his business, dined, as he thought, elegantly, made himself irresistible, gone to the theatre and ogled the ladies, whom he allowed to have a full view of his waistcoat; finally, entirely satisfied with the events of the day, he had retired to rest. As I have already said, each of these youths was visited that night by a singular and impressive dream. Lieutenant Hardinge woke in a cold perspiration, after having imagined that he saw poor old Saunders lying cruelly crushed and wounded beneath a scaffold from which he had fallen. The young officer saw the crowd collected about the injured man, he saw that his consciousness was leaving him, that his eyes were glazing in death.

It was still dark when he awoke, but so disturbed was he by the vision, that he did not sleep again till after the day had broke. While he lay tossing in bed, he wondered greatly what could have suggested such thoughts to his imagination. He knew old Saunders by sight,—that was all; and he probably would have known nothing about him had he not been the father of that rather showy young man whom nobody in Wetton could help remarking. He might have seen him about a new building or on a scaffold, but he had no recollection of having done so. As the light strengthened, he reflected philosophically on the strange freaks of fancy, decided that this was one of the strangest, and that, as such, it was not worthy of further consideration; so he turned round at last and went off to sleep once more.

Mr Benjamin Saunders, in the next room, also dreamed a dream. It was revealed to that young man that a young lady, a reputed heiress, residing near Wetton, had fallen violently in love with him, that he had been merciful to her infirmity, and had promised to marry her. He saw the great preparations that were making for the marriage. He saw an endless line of his future bride's (Miss Fulford's) relations who had come to welcome him into the family, and it was in receiving the cordial hand-grasp of a peer of the realm with his coronet on his head, that the sleeper, overcome by delight, awoke and found that he had been deluded by the baseless fabric of a vision. Unlike such fabrics in general, though, this one did leave something of a wrack behind. It raised in the young man's mind an idea which had never entered it before, but an idea which, finding congenial soil, took root there. After his first disappointment at discovering that he had only been dreaming,



he began to enjoy a *rifacimento* of the happy trance, going over all its incidents with delight, and feeling again a thrill almost equal to that which woke him, when he came to the peer and the coronet. Then he thought what a strange dream it was; a dream which he did not know to be suggested by any antecedent whatever! A thing coming in this remarkable way must mean something; and why should there be any crooked interpretation? why should it not mean what it figured? Other young women had been captivated by his attractions, and why not Miss Fulford? "If she has a fancy for me," thought Benjamin, "I will take care to encourage it; and if she has not, why, perhaps I can inspire one, eh! Yes, yes; this dream shall not be for nothing. I've taken the idea—rather!"

Young Mr Saunders did not sleep again that morning, but whether he lay thinking a long or a short time before the hour of rising arrived he had no idea. His mind was very agreeably occupied, that was all he knew; and he had formed projects which—although, as we shall see, they were perforce put aside for a time—came to be acted upon at length, and helped to create a good deal of confusion. He had now to dress himself and get ready for business, at which let us leave him for the present.

Lieutenant Hardinge also rose and breakfasted, and then mounted his trap to drive back to Wetton, where his presence was required. When he was about three miles from the town he overtook the curate, who had come out for a constitutional walk or to do some parish work, and requested him to come up into his chariot, which that young ecclesiastic did. Then they spoke of the weather, and the races, and two or three more of the topics contained in the formula usually followed by

Englishmen when they meet each other. When these were exhausted Mr Hardinge said—

"And now that you have achieved a little exercise, I suppose you will go home to your painting?"

"No, indeed," answered the curate; "I should have small chance of making progress with that, if I trusted to practising during the working hours of the day. Duty, I assure you, takes up all my recognised time: if I want to follow an accomplishment I must make time for it. My artist work was done hours ago, while you, probably, were dreaming."

"Oh, indeed!" said Hardinge, abstractedly, for the curate's last word had suddenly forced his ideas into another channel. "Since you speak of dreaming, I must tell you of a remarkable dream which disturbed me considerably last night. You know that shrewd old fellow—what's his name?—the old fellow that's a mason or carpenter, or something of that sort; the father of that hero with the chains and pins, you know?"

"Mr Saunders the builder, you mean, probably; what of him?"

"Well, he's a man to whom I never to my knowledge gave a thought, and yet I had a very remarkable and ugly dream concerning him. I thought I saw him on the ground with a crowd around him, dying from a fall off a scaffold."

"Oh, did you? dreams go by contraries, they say. Possibly there may be some good fortune coming to my old acquaintance. He's a prudent and energetic tradesman, and constantly making some good hit or another. The son isn't half so much to my mind, though I fancy he's clever too."

"I never had any dealings with him or even spoke to him, but he seems an arrant puppy."

"Well, perhaps a little forward.

Here we are at your gate. Put me down, now, and I'll make my way into town on foot."

"Shan't I drive you?"

"Dear me! by no means."

"Then, if you don't mind waiting a minute or two, I will have the pleasure of walking with you. I am going to the recruiting office."

So they walked on to town together, up Park Street, along Butler's Buildings, and through Monk Alley; but they couldn't get down Church Street for it was blocked by a rather dense crowd.

"Hollo! what's the matter here?" said the curate; and so saying, he threaded his way among the people, Hardinge following. "Bad job, I'm afraid, Measter," said an artisan as the clergyman passed. There was a new house being built at the corner, and they were among stonechippings and poles. "Somebody hurt, seemingly: Good heavens! it's Mr Saunders."

"What do you say?" eagerly demanded Hardinge, pushing up to where he stood. The shock was dreadful. It was the very scene of his dream. There lay poor Saunders, pale and motionless, his eyes glazing. The doctor was beside him in a few seconds, but he said almost immediately that the man was dying. Ten minutes after, they carried home a corpse upon a plank.

Hardinge was so sick and ill after witnessing this dreadful scene that he asked the curate to walk to his lodgings with him; but the latter, who was domiciled near the church, said they would do better to go into *his* apartments. Thither they went; and a confusion of books and an unfinished picture having been removed from the sofa, the lieutenant was soon laid thereon, and refreshed with a glass of wine.

"A most remarkable circumstance—one that deserves to be recorded," observed the young officer after a time.

"A very singular coincidence, no doubt; but they must happen sometimes, you know. Only consider: if events are jostling each other at every moment of time, it would be marvellous if once in a hundred thousand times or so some two or more didn't appear to be related, when, after all, they are but in accidental juxtaposition."

"I can't think that in this case. There were too many circumstances which agreed as being both in the dream and the reality. If I had simply dreamed that the fact had happened, and afterwards found that it had happened, your explanation might have sufficed. But I not only was forewarned of the event, but also of the exact manner of it. I was a spectator of it in my sleep, and so I was when wide awake. The scene, the crowd, were all as I dreamed of them: the position and wan look of the sufferer; even the glazing of the poor fellow's eyes. Oh, it is horrible!"

"Well, try to turn your mind from it just now," said the curate, "and when you can think calmly about it we'll discuss it more closely. If you had not picked me up on the road, you would probably not have mentioned your dream until after its fulfilment."

"Certainly I should not, but I don't feel easy on that head. It seems to me that I should have warned the unfortunate man, as I could have done if I had started from Plymouth an hour earlier; but, you know, I had no sort of acquaintance with him, didn't know his name even, and could therefore never imagine that the dream could have any significance. You treated it lightly yourself when I told you of it, didn't you?"

"I did. I don't suppose I shall ever again speak with levity of a dream of the kind, though I can quite fancy myself giving cautions derived from dreams to all manner of men,



and getting laughed at for my credulity ; for I imagine that no instance such as this will come within my knowledge again, although I may dream myself, and hear of others dreaming very impressive dreams."

"If only somebody interested in the man had been the dreamer, one might see fitness in a vision of the kind ; but for a stranger and a sojourner like me to receive such a revelation passes one's understanding."

The curate, though very much struck with this dream, was cautious about mentioning it. He did, however, name it to a few of his more intimate friends ; indeed, it was through him that I became acquainted with it. Mr Hardinge never mentioned it at all ; not, that is to say, while he abode in Wetton. He had a nervous horror of the subject. If leave of absence had been procurable, he would have sought a diversion of ideas from change of air ; but duty required him on the spot just at this time, and so he accepted, with more gratitude than he had ever felt for them before, the invitations which he received to little country parties. Now Hardinge was a rather pleasant and a rather good-looking fellow. Wetton had only lately been made a recruiting station, and he was the first officer that had been quartered in the place. What marvel, then, if Wetton made up its mind that the lieutenant was destined to form a lasting connection with their town ; in other words, that he was to take a wife of the daughters of Wetton ? Many kindly little coteries there were which arranged this delicate matter very thoroughly ; but as each knot selected a different bride for him, it is evident that a good many of the speculations were destined to fail. One of these juntas, if it didn't quite bring about the result which it con-

templated, proved its ability by half doing it. It produced a good deal of misunderstanding and of misery ; but those things, it thought, were not chargeable against it, seeing that it had gone so far toward the accomplishment of its idea, and, but for the insensibility of one of the parties, would certainly have brought it about.

Among the company whom the young officer met at different entertainments was Miss Fulford, a lady who has been before mentioned as connected with the dream of Mr Benjamin Saunders. Miss Fulford was an orphan, with a good property of her own. People were fond of saying that she was a great heiress, but that is what people always say. It may be a mere figure to talk of gilding refined gold ; but it is only the naked truth to say that when any comfortable quantity of refined gold finds its way into a person's coffers, that person's neighbours are sure to increase it by a stout multiplier. Miss Fulford was, moreover, possessed of considerable personal attractions ; so that the portion of Wetton society which desired to bestow this young lady upon the lieutenant would have endowed him with the greatest prize of the neighbourhood. By their profound policy these two young people frequently found themselves sitting next each other at dinners, or suppers, or at the round games then so much the fashion at Wetton ; or if there were an excursion into the country, they would be in the same vehicle. Possibly the good gossips rather overdid these couplings. The plot might have worked better if a little more of the management had been left to the parties themselves. Whether or not because the promoters were too eager I cannot say, but it is certain that Mr Hardinge could never be warmed up to the point of falling in love as they would

have had him. He was, however, a polite, agreeable man, with something to say about most of what was going on in the great world. Perhaps to the *Wettonians*, as they called themselves, he may have appeared a more animated and a better informed man than he really was; for they had no one at all of his sort to compare him with. Then he, of course, as became his profession, knew how to be gallant and complimentary, although there was nothing about him of the coxcomb or the lady-killer. But men sometimes involuntarily and unconsciously wander to results which cannot be reached by the arts of others who devote themselves mind and body to the attainment. Hardinge's indifference, which caused him to be entirely natural, and to appear just as for the time he felt, exercised a dangerous influence on the young lady with whom he was so often associated. Miss Fulford found herself taking note of his moods and his words. When he was gay, and more attentive or impressive than usual, she would be elated and unusually complacent; if she thought him absent or dull, she was chagrined. She, after a while, began to watch his manner and to weigh his expressions, imagining that they must be indicative of change of feeling towards herself, when in truth she was entirely unconnected with them. This, one sees, was an unfortunate state of mind for a girl of eighteen to be in. Indeed, Hardinge in his simplicity and innocence was pursuing the very course which, as we learn from a modern teacher of the art of love, or rather of the art of inspiring a passion, is the one for lady-killers to adopt:—

“Not much he kens, I ween, of woman's breast,

Who thinks that wanton thing is won by sighs;  
What careth she for hearts when once possess'd?  
Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes;  
But not too humbly, or she will despise Thee and thy suit, though told in moving tropes.  
Disguise e'en tenderness, if thou art wise;  
Brisk confidence still best with woman copes;  
Pique her and soothe in turn, soon Passion crowns thy hopes.”\*

The match-makers, I am afraid, had a great deal to answer for in this case. It is true that after having first conceived the grand idea of the connection, they proceeded with much impartiality to instil into the parties concerned a proper sense of what was so ably designed for them. But, inasmuch as Hardinge was a stranger, and not a man given to encourage familiarity from persons with whom he was but slightly acquainted, joking and insinuating had to be done very gently with him. He checked some sallies, and really did not understand others which the natives thought rather smart, and steadily refused to hear the voice of the charmers—rather the charmers were no charmers for him, for he did not discern, and made no endeavour to discern, their object. It was different with Miss Fulford. She could not act the deaf adder to Wetton wit and Wetton playfulness. If these were a little broad and plain, was she not “to the manner born”? and were not all those who nodded and supposed, and “knew they couldn't be deceived,” her relations and acquaintances, who surely might, if anybody might, use a little freedom of speech? Neither did these soft impeachments seem altogether unpleasant to the young lady, who put aside the raillery so as not at all to



give the idea that it pained or offended her.

Now there resided in Wetton a certain *demoiselle* named Lydia Tarraway. Miss Lydia, I have some reason to think, would herself have had no objection to a little admiration or attention from the young officer, and there was a section of Wettonians who selected her for his ladye-love, although her backers were neither numerous nor influential. She was older than Miss Fulford, and evinced a good deal of affectionate curiosity as to "whether there was anything in" the rumoured affair between her and Hardinge. While she was beating about to start information on this head, and laying all sorts of little innocent plots to make people communicative who were likely to have been at all behind the scenes, and to worm opinions out of persons who were regarded as shrewd observers, and constructors—persons who, if they chanced to see a young man and woman together for five minutes, would out of that little glimpse put together an affecting idyl, just as an expert naturalist, if you show him a rare bone, will forthwith furnish a restoration of the whole skeleton to which it belonged,—while she was thus conducting a little private inquiry business, there occurred one of those encouraging accidents which do sometimes assist earnest inquirers after knowledge. Miss Tarraway was invited to dine at Colkaton (that was the name of Miss Fulford's place), where Mr Hardinge also was to be a guest; and, as she had not always a *chaperone* to take her out, she was to make a little visit of a day or two. It would be strange now if she could not discover how matters stood.

Mrs Fulford—for Miss Fulford did not of course live quite alone—had arranged so that her daughter might be led to the dinner-table by

the lieutenant. She had a Devonshire squire to sit at her own right hand and carve for her; and she had been mindful of Lydia Tarraway, and provided her an escort in Mr Norcott, who is our friend the curate. It was a tolerably large party, and the accidents of the procession to the board would have taken Mr Norcott and his charge to the same side of the table as Miss Fulford, had not Lydia remembered that she should certainly faint if she sat near the fire, and besought another couple to change places. By this stratagem—of which she despised the cost, to wit, shivering all through dinner so that she could hardly keep her teeth from chattering, and afterwards having a bad bronchial attack, for she was a chilly and delicate young woman—she sat opposite the supposed lovers, and so had a full view of their bearing towards each other. And very cleverly she made her observations. It would not have been at all consonant to her feelings to show any want of attention to Mr Norcott, and so she kept up an animated conversation with him about poultry, dissent, choral music, the last new tale by the author of 'Waverley,' the wholesomeness or otherwise of scalded cream, painting, the recent wrestling-match, and a variety of other topics; but all the while she had one eye, or some sense that was as good as an eye, taking note of what was going on across the table, and another mind besides that which was at the service of Mr Norcott, marking, weighing, and deciding the state of the love case.

It has often struck me in these latter days, that women make a mistake when, in seeking to prove their rights to an equality with the other sex, they compete with men on the latter's own ground. They take up subjects, and try experiments which are strange and new to them, while to men they are familiar, thus giving

the males a strong pull. Now, why don't they rest their pretensions on things which they can do and men can't? For instance, why don't they challenge the dominant gender to perform two operations of the mind at the same time—to keep up a brisk discussion about all things whatsoever, and certain others, while they watch like cats, and record, compare, and appraise the words, looks, and gestures of certain persons sitting apart from them, whom, for the moment, they are pleased to admire, or hate, or rival, or to be otherwise interested in? I should like to see how many points the *soi-disant* superior animals would make at a game like this. Cannot one fancy the clumsy exposure of their aims, the absences of mind, the impertinent listening and staring, and at other times the total failure of observation they would betray, as, vainly attempting to steer a smooth middle course between the different objects of attention, they would attend properly to neither, but be drawn to them alternately and irregularly—now bumping against Scylla, now sucked away to Charybdis? Does not one see how feeble, useless, and transparent they would be while labouring after such an accomplishment, and from what an immense height of ability the ladies might look down upon and pity such puny achievement? These are the kinds of contests whereby to make man feel how little he is by the side of the subtler instinct. When Richard, you know, had severed an iron mace with his two-handed sword, Saladin was not such a fool as to rival him in rough smashing; no—he sliced a thin gauze veil by making it dance on his scimitar's edge. And Richard could no more give the fine cut to the veil than the Sultan could chop up pig-iron! A word to the wise (I mean to the ladies) will be sufficient.

But in Miss Tarraway's young days nobody had heard of woman's rights and wrongs, and she could only exercise her keen wits for utility: there was, at that slow period, no open rivalry with creation's lords, so she could not use her talents in contention. She made good use of them nevertheless, as has been said. It was dull weather, with an irritating east wind, and Hardinge was taciturn and absent; he seemed hungry too, or else he ate to fill up the time and escape conversation. His fair neighbour was at first full of life and chat; but her spirits were naturally chilled (as whose would not be?) by finding how little sympathetic fire she could kindle. Miss Fulford, however, was too pleasant a girl to fall into sullenness, or to let it be seen that she was disappointed or discomposed. She turned the matter off for a while by talking to the person on the other side of her, and to Norcott across the table; and when she found that Hardinge could not be piqued into brisk discourse, and was rather addressing himself to the good creatures on which the curate had so impressively asked a blessing, she vented her mortification in inviting him to eat, and in causing all manner of dishes to be handed to him, of many of which he partook, not seeming to be quite aware of what he was doing. None of the little scene was lost on Miss Tarraway, who drew her own inferences, and decided that, courtship or not, Mr Hardinge's affections were not very deeply engaged. About Miss Fulford, she was not so clear. It was doubtful whether she was inducing him to eat as jesting with his apparent appetite, or because she was wounded in spirit. Any lively young woman would, of course, be nettled by such insensibility as the lieutenant evinced; but to have one's vanity a little chafed, and to be heart-sick for unre-



quited affection, were very different things. However, Miss Lydia had found out something of the case, and she meant to find out all of it before returning home. Meanwhile she secured in the drawing-room a warm corner to make amends for her frigid seat at dinner, and *she* sat next Mr Hardinge at *commerce*, and, finding plenty of *peuple* to talk to, let him indulge his humour and talk or not as he chose. He had, however, thawed a little by this time, and was more genial; seeing which, Miss Fulford was persuaded in her heart that his behaviour at dinner was intended to be a pointed exhibition of indifference to her. So she passed a rather uncomfortable evening, but took care not to let her disappointment appear—rattling away, and doing the honours of her house unflinchingly.

As people in those days dined tolerably early and sat tolerably late, the young hostess's patience was subjected to a weary ordeal. But the hour at length came when the whist-party had played their last rubber, an old gentleman who had won it and lost every former one being radiant with his victory. The round game had been shut up some time before; and the party was taking some refreshment preparatory to separating. As Hardinge came to say his *adieux*, he seemed to have found his tongue again, and stood a few minutes talking to Mrs Fulford and afterwards to her daughter, whom he expressed a wish of meeting and dancing with at a coming quadrille-party. His affability stirred up the young lady's emotions yet again; she found an excuse for, and forgave, his previous coldness, and gave her hand to him graciously as he departed; she was inclined to hope once more. "Let us talk it over, Gertrude," said Miss Tarraway; "do you mind my coming in to see you, dear, before we go to bed?"

"Do come, Lydia dear," answered Miss Fulford—"I shall be delighted;" though it is doubtful whether this may not have been too strong an expression, as she certainly had a yearning to be alone with her own thoughts.

"What a delicious fire!" exclaimed Lydia, as she drew her easy-chair close up to the hearth and put her feet on the fender. "This is such a dear, comfortable house!"

"Do you know, Lydia," answered Gertrude, "I was quite unhappy all through dinner at your being so far from the grate. You looked quite as if you were suffering from cold."

"Did I? La! now, how odd! Do you know, my dear, I thought it one of the pleasantest, the very pleasantest parties, and I enjoyed it so much! Mr Norcott is a very agreeable young man, too, isn't he?"

"We think so, surely, or we shouldn't have given him to you. He has plenty to say, and he says it nicely. He isn't bad-looking either, is he?"

"No, indeed; and that is really more than can be said of most of our young men, for certainly they are rather an ordinary set. I don't say it ill-naturedly, you know; I include my brother Phil and all. You are going to the Harveys' dance on Friday, aren't you? I'm going. They made me promise, but I fear it will be stupid. The Parker party from Plymouth can't come, which will make it dull. That young Harry Parker is a delightful young man—so stylish, so agreeable; quite fascinating, I call him. Oh, wasn't that a frightful thing of poor Mr Saunders? Mr Norcott told me he positively saw him dying. I was so shocked when I heard of it: it was told to us just at dinner-time; I declare I couldn't eat a bit—not a morsel. It was so dreadful."

In this way did Lydia run on for half an hour or so, showing no sign

of being about to retire, when Gertrude, who was not quite so full of prattle, remarked—

“I don’t know how it is that I get so sleepy, Lydia dear, but we were up late last night, and have had a fatiguing day. I am afraid you find me stupid; but I shan’t be more lively till I’ve slept. Dear me! I’m quite ashamed of yawning: you’ll excuse me, won’t you, Lydia?”

LYDIA.—“Oh, and I’ve been so selfish and inconsiderate to sit here boring you. *I am so sorry,*” (*taking her feet from the fender, and gathering her robe about her, as if preparing to depart*).

GERTRUDE.—“Pray, Lydia, pray don’t imagine I’m tired of you. Don’t for anything disturb yourself; only I’m so stupid, and we breakfast so early.”

LYDIA.—“Of course, dear. It’s quite time to go to bed, too, isn’t it? Dear me! past one. I never! How cold those young men must have found it driving home! In an open trap, too,” (shuddering) “ho—o—o—o—o, what creatures men are! I hope it isn’t true that we are likely to lose Mr Hardinge.”

GERTRUDE.—“Lose Mr Hardinge?—how, when? what do you mean?”

LYDIA.—“Oh, nothing, you know; only they said something about his joining his regiment. Well, good night, Gertrude; I really *will* go now. I’m so sorry I kept you up.”

GERTRUDE.—“Nay, Lydia, you mistake, I assure you; I do so love to hear you talk. Sit a little longer, I implore you. Do tell me what this is about Mr Hardinge. He never said a word of it at dinner. Did he tell you?”

LYDIA.—“He didn’t say a word of anything at dinner, I think, did he? You’re *quite* sure I’m not wearying you? Well, let me see: was it Mr Hardinge? No, I don’t think he told me. It must have been—No, it wasn’t. Oh, I know.

It was Mr Thorne—and he knew, of course.”

GERTRUDE.—“Why, of course, dear?”

LYDIA.—“Oh, he’s an officer, too, you know; he’s in the militia.”

GERTRUDE (*with immense contempt*).—“The militia!!”

LYDIA.—“Well, dear, the militia. Isn’t one officer as likely to be well informed as another?”

GERTRUDE (*as if she were already the lady of a distinguished leader of the regular forces*).—“No, Lydia; I should think not. In the military world the militia are not looked upon as soldiers at all, I assure you.”

LYDIA.—“Oh, there you mistake, dear, I am certain. Harry Parker is in the militia; and a handsomer, genteeler, man or a nicer partner, is not to be found in any part of the army.”

GERTRUDE.—“But this Mr Thorne: what did the creature say?”

LYDIA.—“Why, the creature, as you call him, Gertrude, said that Mr Hardinge had been for some time employed recruiting at another place before he was sent here, and that they can’t be away from their regiments for more than a fixed time. And so Mr Hardinge will soon have to go away, and we shall have another officer here, perhaps a more conversable one.”

GERTRUDE.—“I don’t believe that Mr Thorne knows anything about the matter. We must have heard of it if Mr Hardinge had been likely to leave us soon. Of course it’s of very little consequence whether he does or not: but I should like to show you that these militia gentlemen know nothing about these things. I’ll inquire about it and let you know.”

LYDIA.—“No, Gertrude, dear: it was I who made the assertion. Wouldn’t it be nicer if *I* were to inquire about it and let *you* know?”

GERTRUDE.—“Well, dear, if you like: but you’ll be sure to tell me?”



LYDIA.—“That I will: I wouldn’t keep you anxious for the world.”

GERTRUDE.—“I mean only that I should like to prove that the militia don’t know.”

LYDIA.—“Exactly: I quite understand. By the way, whom do you think the gossips have given Mr Hardinge to? You’ll never guess.”

GERTRUDE.—“Really! Who? Do tell me.”

LYDIA.—“Oh, it’s too absurd, you know. And, dear me! look at the timepiece. I’m so ashamed. Good night, dear.” (*Offering to kiss her.*)

GERTRUDE.—“Oh, don’t go, Lydia. It’s quite early. I hardly ever go to bed till much after this. And the fire’s burning so bright. There, I’ll put on a little more coal. It’s so cosy. Don’t go.”

LYDIA.—“So kind of you, dear. But you’re tired, I know, and you were up late last night. I really have not the conscience.”

GERTRUDE.—“Your lively conversation has quite driven away drowsiness, and it’s a thousand times more agreeable than sleep. There now, put up your feet again. You were saying they had got up some silly match for Mr Hardinge.”

LYDIA.—“Oh, some rubbish, probably without a grain of truth in it. I wish I hadn’t mentioned it. There, we *must* go to bed now. Good night.”

GERTRUDE.—“Do tell me, dear.”

LYDIA (*kissing and breaking away*).—“Another time perhaps, but positively we mustn’t begin talking again. I will release you now. Pleasant dreams——”

And Miss Lydia withdrew to her apartment saying to herself, “So the love’s all on her side, is it! I didn’t think Gertrude was so deep. It is quite possible that *he* may admire somebody else. I don’t think he cares for her, notwithstanding her money.”

At this time the subject of her speculations had been some time

enjoying a sound sleep. The curate and he had had cigars together, talked over the party, which they voted not very lively, then separated and gone to rest, their minds not particularly occupied with the young ladies in whose company they had spent the evening.

Poor Saunders was carried to his last home, followed or attended by nearly everybody in Wetton. It was a certainty in that ancient town that any one hurried away by a sudden or violent death would have a crowded funeral; and as we know that in Mr Saunders’s case there was to be added to the suddenness of his end the great respect which had been felt for him when living, none will wonder that the concourse was large. It was not, however, allowed to be an unregulated crowd, pushing, blocking the streets, or perhaps inadvertently incommoding the poor mourners: no—that, I am happy to say, had been provided against. It was known that everybody would be there; and so it was arranged that all who could be reduced to any sort of order should have places assigned them,—and this was the way of it: The Tradesmen’s Club (of which the deceased had of course been a leading member) would “walk,”—that is, follow the funeral in procession: but inasmuch as there were Wettonians who were not of the Club, the freemasons would see their departed brother interred with masonic honours; and inasmuch as masons with their insignia gave a very public character to the solemnity, it was thought advisable to head the procession with the Wetton band (which, I need not mind saying, was the band of the disembodied militia, only wearing plain clothes, except such of them as were entitled to masonic decorations): again, as clubmen, masons, and bandsmen did not comprehend all the Wettonians, youthful Wetton was encouraged to be present in

schools and choirs: moreover, inasmuch as there would yet remain an unmarshalled remnant, not of the most orderly, it was made known by Tom Ashlant, the bruiser of the place, through his attorneys and agents, that "if he seed any darned feller" (so Mr Ashlant was pleased to express himself) "deuin' uv anythin' unproper like, he would knock hes teu eyes into one after 'twes all auver." So all the world was thus brought under control except a one-eyed boy, who was timid and orderly, and not likely to take advantage of his being *ultra vires*.

We may think what we will of Wetton's mode of giving effect to its desires; but this, at any rate, I can say, that Wetton's desire was to show the highest respect for its lost townsman, and to inter his remains with as much solemn *éclat* as was possible. Wetton knew that Saunders's place would not be adequately filled by his successor; and even on the way back from the churchyard, serious groups discussed the probable new state of things.

"Dest tho' think they'll put young Ben into the Corporation?" asked an artisan.

"No that I know by," answered his friend. "What shud they dew wi' *he* to Guildhall? Giv' en zome bear's fat to grease his wig wi', and a weskert spotted wi' scarlet, an' yellor, an' blew, like the door o' Jan Mattheys the penter's shop, and he would n' care to be a Alderman ner a Mayor nither."

"Likely nat. Should n' wonder if Splitfig the grocer get 'lected. I seed en a struttin' along jes' this minnit wi' his mason's aporn, as if he was a Lord Mayor or a Jestiss a'ready. Ben 'll be like to carry on the buildin' trade now, won't a'?"

"If he hev a got the wit. But Ben can't look arter work like th'

oul' man. He never larned the tricks o' the trade, an' every feul a'most could desaiv en. Reckon Measter Ben 'll kip hesself up vor a soart of a show chap, sittin' in a dandy coat, an' makin' of his bow, an' grizzlin'\* behind a desk with a big book upon en."

"An' whew's to overlook?"

"Darned ef I know. Very like there'll be a voreman, but 'tis on-possible vor me to say. Us mus' wait an' zee."

"The Mistus now may hev something to zay to the busin'ss: us never thort o' that."

"No more us didn't; well, her may hev to dew wi' et for sartain, an' ef her dew, things won't go on noan the wuss, I reckon."

Now this last thought about "the Mistus" was not far wide of the mark; for the business was so left that it was to be carried on for the present in Mrs Saunders's name, which meant that she would have an extensive controlling power—for she hadn't lived thirty years with "her poor master," as she called him, without learning the value of vigilance and management. Mrs Saunders knew, too, that Benjamin would not do for an overseer, and so she lost no time in procuring an able foreman. Perhaps this arrangement was all the more readily made by reason of a hope that her son was destined to distinguish himself in some line higher than a builder's.

Now it happened that, not long after the family's bereavement, Mrs and Miss Fulford had occasion to call at the little office which hung on to Mrs Saunders's house, and separated it from the great double gates leading into the building yard. The widow sate alone in the room with her spectacles on, doing, or trying to do, some plain sewing work, but pausing continually, and laying the work in her lap as one

\* Grinning.



distressing thought after another crossed her mind. When Mrs Fulford spoke very sympathisingly to her, and asked after her health, the poor woman tried to answer bravely, but broke down, and wept before many words were uttered.

"I feel but poorly, thank you kindly, ma'am. 'Tis very wisht any one findin' theirself alone in the world, and that so suddent; but there! 'twas the Lord's will that afflicted I should be, and what use complaining? Many and many happy years I knowed—me and one that's gone; and now things is turned. Forgive me, ma'am; I shouldn't take on this way. I trust you are well yourself, ma'am; and Miss Fulford. Well, the time do pass, dear, dear! It seems like yesterday that you was a little thing like, a-running by the side of the governess."

"Time does pass, Mrs Saunders. I can hardly believe that my daughter is a woman. There she is, however, as tall as myself, and putting that matter quite beyond a doubt."

"Sure, sure; and it's likely now you've called about some work that's wantin' to Colkatton."

"Well, yes, indeed; we have come to see what can be done to make the dining-room a little warmer. There's a large grate, but somehow those who sit opposite it hardly feel the heat. It must be of a bad pattern or badly fixed."

"The very thing that my poor dear master was so fortunate with; excoose me, ma'am, again; I have no doubt we can find out what's amiss. Somebody shall go out and look to it."

And the two ladies left.

At supper that evening Mrs Saunders did not fail to mention the visit to her son, and in doing so she expressed herself very gratefully for the feeling manner in which Mrs Fulford had condoled with her. The young man who, as may be supposed,

was dull and sorrowful enough, roused himself at the mention of the name, and asked what the ladies came for, which of course he was told.

"And they was kind and comforting in their words to you, was they, mother? I really believe that is a good girl, and deserving of a little attention, which is more than can be said for many of 'em."

"Good girl!" echoed Mrs Saunders; "she's a pleasant young lady, and they're kind people, and good customers. That is not the way your poor father would have spoken, Benjamin. You've got to think about the business now, my son, and must be partickler how you talk about the gentry."

But Benjamin was not thinking of the business just at that moment. An imagination which his father's awful death had banished from his mind was now moving back to establish itself in its old quarters. The coroneted peer, with his friendly grasp, passed again before his mind's eye, and the great destiny which he thought he was equal to carving out for himself, got possession of his thoughts.

"Yes," said Benjamin, addressing his own fancy rather than replying to his mother's remark; "she's about the best girl of the lot, and I've no doubt will make a fine, stylish, showy woman, if she gets a husband that's worthy of her."

Mrs Saunders didn't know whether this meant undutifulness, or want of brains, or absence of mind; but whatever was the matter was more than she could bear in her present shattered state, and she burst into tears. Benjamin behaved properly on the occasion. He endeavoured to soothe his parent, and expressed a hope that he had not said or done anything to distress her, protesting that he had been intent on some subject which had come into his head, and had not

taken in the meaning of what she said. Whereupon Mrs Saunders was pacified, and renewed her admonition concerning the relation of those in business to the gentry.

"All right, mother," said the youth—"it's a trick I've fallen into; but I'll be careful, never fear. Now about this fireplace; I'll ride out and have a look at it to-morrow."

"You, Benjamin?"

"Me, mother. You said they'd been kind, and showed feelin' for us, and it'll look complimentary if I go out and take the orders myself. John Bray can be there waiting in case there should be anything about the flues or the grate that I don't understand. But they'll think it civil of me if I go myself; and besides, I must begin and move about a little now, and not leave everything to the men."

This last sentiment was entirely agreeable to Mrs Saunders, who began to think that a sense of his responsibilities was dawning in the young man's mind. Of course she sanctioned his going to Colkattton.

And Benjamin went, attired in his best suit of mourning, which garb, as it did not admit of chains and bright contrasts, happily restrained his efflorescence. He, of course, thought this a disadvantage; and he endeavoured to do himself compensatory justice by an extra larding of pomatum. The unguent, however, compared with the ornaments and colours, was but as the genie of the ring to the genie of the lamp; and so imperfectly by its means did the youth express his mind, that the footman who opened the door mistook him for a gentleman, politely informed him that Mrs Fulford was at home, and in respectful accents asked whose name he should take in. He was, however, a little affrighted from his propriety when he heard it.

"Saunders! What! on business, sir?"

"Yes—a—that is—I called to look at a part of the building. Mrs Fulford understands."

"Mr Saunders the mason, isn't it?" said the flunkey, who felt that he could never, never forgive himself, and that the two of them (that is, he and self), though unable to separate, must maintain a constrained intimacy through time and eternity. "Well, just take a seat here. I know Madam can't be spoke to for a few minutes. I'll let her know after a bit;" with which remark, uttered with his back towards Benjamin, the attendant hastily disappeared, determined that when the visitor should ring again, as he would be obliged to do, the manner of his reception should not only blot out all memory of former deference, but should evince such an amount of retributive *sang froid* as would effectually restore equilibrium.

Thus rudely left to himself, Mr Saunders did not, of course, seat himself on a hall-chair as he had been bidden to do; he stood about in some of his best attitudes, paced the hall two or three times, examined statues and curiosities, looked through the window at a peacock on the grass (a bird which had some title to his notice, as they had many dispositions in common), and at length bethought him of charging his friend the footman with a reminder; but before taking that step he confronted a mirror which hung in the apartment, to ascertain whether he could in any way add dignity to his presence, and by that look he averted the interview with the functionary, and altogether baffled the fiendish vengeance which the latter had imagined. For, as he was adjusting a lock of hair, a door opened behind him, and he beheld the reflection of Miss Fulford; who had entered the hall. This was awkward. Benjamin's first resolution was, or rather his



instinct prompted him, to make some passing remark about the wind having blown his hat off and made him unfit to appear, a subtlety which his greasy sleek locks would have shown to be of the very weakest if it had been offered. But the young lady, who was as little moved as if she had but seen him scraping his boots, stifled in its birth the smart explanation which was meditated, by speaking quietly. She ought, he considered, to have smirked or giggled, and so given opportunity for his remarks, instead of saying—

“Oh, you are Mr Saunders, are you not? and come, I suppose, to see about the dining-room grate. My mother unfortunately has just walked out. If you had arrived five minutes sooner, you could have seen her.”

The only possible reply to this was, that he had been in the house four times five minutes; and when he said this, Benjamin felt thankful that he had not uttered the little fable about the blowing off of his hat; for, if he had, he would have stood convicted of having been all that time before the glass, whereas now it might be supposed that he had only taken a passing glance at himself—a very excusable indulgence, it seemed to him, when the reflection was so well worth looking at. Miss Fulford, however, evidently did not trouble herself about his manner of employing himself since his arrival, but thought it very strange that no mention had been made of him, little guessing how grievously the self-esteem of her footman had been bruised, and that this delay had been necessary to the healing thereof. “However,” said she, “I think I can show you what is the matter: will you just come this way? Now, this is the room, you see, and any one would think the grate would hold a fire large enough to warm it; but really,

when the weather is at all cold, hardly any heat can be perceived a yard or two off.”

Saunders guessed immediately what was the matter, and, talking of a subject which he understood, he was soon comparatively at his ease again. “I can’t be quite certain till I’ve had the grate taken out that things are as I say,” observed the youth, after a long explanation; “but I think I can promise that the room will be more comfortable after we’ve—he, he—doctored it according to my prescription” (the young fellow was fast recovering his easy, sparkling style): but if we can’t effect a perfect cure of the old concern, then I shall recommend to have it took out, and put a radiator in its place.”

“I’m sure I hope you’ll do something effectual,” answered the young lady. “I’m almost frozen when I sit on the further side of the table.”

“Nothing,” said the gallant Benjamin, “is so trying to beauty as to be pinched with the cold. It shan’t be my fault, Miss Fulford, if you have to complain of the coldness of the room again. I shall make it my particular duty to attend to your wishes.” While he was thus neatly working up towards a proper footing, and letting her see that his mind was worthy of the choice casket which contained it, the young lady left the room, to return again immediately, he did not doubt. He hoped that she had retired for an instant, just to compose her countenance after that aptly turned compliment—or, at the least, that she had gone to order him refreshment. Therefore it gave him some disappointment to see his friend the footman enter, and to hear that functionary say, in a tone which did not indicate extreme deference—

“I say, when be you a-goin’ to make a mess in this here room—to-day or to-morrow?”

"I've explained what is necessary to Miss Fulford," replied Benjamin, with some hauteur.

"Oh, you hev, hev yew? Then yew hev'n't a done it well; for her it is that wants to know when yew'm goin' to begin."

"The men can begin at any time, so far as I'm concerned: but you'll want to raise the carpet and cover up some of the furniture first. You'd better have it ready by to-morrow morning."

"Oh, very well. The men's yew, I s'pose: and a nasty sooty job yew'm likely to hev. I say, if yew find it thirsty work yew may step out towards the pantry, and p'raps there'll be a horn o' ale there."

Benjamin would not, at that moment, have objected to the use of a little personal violence towards this unpleasant domestic. He refrained himself, however, and in stately silence left the house, and relieved John Bray, who had been holding the animal all this time, of the charge of his horse.

"It seems to have been fated," Gertrude said to herself, "that I should be troubled by somebody this afternoon. It cost me some pains to escape that stupid old admiral, and then I must fall into the way of this vulgar fellow!" the meaning of which soliloquy was, that Admiral Tautbrace and his two daughters had been calling at Colkatton that afternoon; and that the old gentleman, who said he never could have enough of Miss Fulford's company, had proposed that her mother and she should accompany their visitors some way through the grounds, making that their afternoon stroll. Mrs Fulford had assented, much to the annoyance of her daughter; and the latter, after retiring with the elder lady, as if to prepare for the walk, had excused herself.

The admiral was a near neighbour, and the owner of a small property, to which he conceived that the lands of Colkatton would form an appropriate addition. He was rather an agreeable old gentleman than otherwise; and, as long as his gallantries appeared aimless, Gertrude rather liked him, and the two lone ladies were wont to consult him and lean upon him. But of late his admiration had been marked; and his pointed attentions Miss Fulford would probably at no time have appreciated: now that she was agitated by an affection whose requital was somewhat doubtful, they were distasteful in a high degree. I have often reflected upon this poor girl's lot, apparently so cruel and undeserved. Here were her friends busying themselves to create in her an attachment to a young man about whom they knew very little, and who might for a variety of reasons be unwilling to return such affection: here were two aspirants, an elderly gentleman who might have been a grandfather, and a presuming vulgar tradesman, each entertaining designs upon herself and fortune: and here was the swain who could have made her happy by his love, and to whose desert she and her fortune were far more than equal, just letting things go wrong from sheer insensibility; for I firmly believe that if he had been brought to seriously consider the advantages which might have been his, he would not have been such a fool as to decline them. If *he*, now, had dreamed what Mr Benjamin Saunders dreamed about her, I think things would have turned out differently. I can't help believing that the dream was sent by some power friendly to Gertrude, and that, out of carelessness, or out of spite, it missed its way.

*(To be continued.)*



## SCEPTICISM AND MODERN POETRY.

THERE are doubts and doubts. Not so many, perhaps, as is generally supposed, of those "honest" ones in which there lives—according to Tennyson—"more faith than half the creeds." It has, in fact, become the fashion in certain quarters to over-compassionate the doubter, to accredit him with a greater depth, and even with a more thorough conscientiousness, than the man convinced. But with every desire to find the reasonableness of such a view, we have entirely failed to discover why the holding of a creed should imply a smaller share either of intelligence or honesty than the holding of a doubt. Credulity has its negative side as well as its positive one, and there is as much room to slip on the one side as on the other. Clough—himself the most conscientious of poetical sceptics—admits, that if on the one hand "hopes are dupes," on the other, "fears may be liars;" and, in short, there is no good reason, other things being equal, for supposing that the man who rejects evidence may not be quite as great a fool as the man who accepts it. Creeds, no doubt, are easily adopted. We in a sense fall heirs to them. They lie about us from our very infancy, and as soon as we are able to think, they are recommended to us by those whom we very naturally respect. In this way, it is not to be denied that we are apt to creep into them with only too little inquiry. But on the other hand, are the great majority of doubts not only equally weak at the root and held with infinitely more self-complacency, not to say conceit? Search faith for its foundations, and in too many cases we daresay they will be found loose and flimsy enough: but subject doubt to a like

scrutiny—strip it of all the mystical generalities it seeks to clothe itself in, and the pensive poetical sadness it so frequently affects—and in all but the rare exceptions, you will find that it is neither more nor less than our old friend Sir Oracle in a new disguise. The philosophy that questions everything with a regretfully necessitous air, and a sorrowful shake of the head, passes with too many for originality, and even profundity, until the trick is found out. That there are honest doubts, however, and honest doubters, we do not mean to question—godly doubters even—doubters of the order of "that white soul," as a living poet so beautifully says of Socrates—

"Which sat beneath the laurels day by day,  
And, fired with burning faith in God and Right,  
Doubted men's doubts away"—

doubters whose doubts ultimately tend to broaden and deepen the foundations of faith rather than undermine them. Doubt of this description is but faith's handmaid, and to whom faith is perpetually indebted, whether it has the candour to acknowledge the debt or not. In a certain sense it is the test of truth itself, and no faith is worth the name that cannot pass through its fires unscathed.

Perhaps there has been nothing more suicidal to the real interests of religion than the shallow theology which without distinction, and without a hearing, bundles all scepticism into that too convenient limbo of certain minds to which are relegated the works of the devil. The easiness of the process might itself cast a doubt on its efficiency.

For on the supposition even that the classification is correct, and that scepticism without discrimination might be put down in the diabolical category, those who know the devil best—or at least the spiritual difficulty his name is made to represent—know well, that he is not to be balked in this way by a mere wave of the hand.

In fact there is no question as to whether we shall be troubled with doubt or not: we must. In a mixed world of good and evil, a state of things is not even conceivable that would afford “no hinge or loop to hang a doubt on.” The world where it is not, must be one either altogether sacred to truth, or wholly abandoned to lies. Doubt and faith live under the same imperfect conditions, and the point at which one dies, the other also and consequently dies. And if the necessity of the case could only teach the impossible purist who wishes to ignore the existence of doubt altogether, to look it more steadily and honestly and thoughtfully in the face, where he has found only the devil before, he might possibly discover the presence of God as well, in the periodical recurrence of the doubter in the history of all living faith. The damage that “honest” doubt can do to the real supports of faith must ever be trivial; while its use in knocking away the conventional props of it is inestimable. The common and easy acceptance by the many of that rather vulgar personage—the regulation Mephistopheles of poetry and the drama—has probably done a good deal in modern times to instruct that prevailing incapacity to disassociate the questioning spirit from the diabolical. But in order to see that such a conclusion is the shallowest of generalities, the weakest of confusions, it is only necessary to fall back on the history of Christianity itself. The most

important of truths were doubts once. Those soul certainties which men can plant their feet upon, and feel with Milton that—

“If this fail  
The pillared firmament is rottenness,  
And earth’s base built on stubble”—

were nearly all dangerous heresies at one period of their history. The strength of the Christian religion in our day is as much indebted to her heretics as to her saints; or rather, should we say the maturer verdict of time in many cases has pronounced these two titles to be one?

But, however gladly men may acknowledge the existence of these honest doubts, which, closely looked into, are but the transitional phases of faith, they must also admit that these are few compared to the unnumbered host of doubts which have little or no root in conscience, and which appear rather to proceed from a self-satisfied indifference to any faith at all. This kind of doubt has none of the troubles that afflict the genuine and honest article. Its deepest pains seem to be readily assuaged in a kind of sentimental and *quasi*-philosophical regret.

It is mostly this half-hearted and half-affected variety of doubt that has taken a poetical form in modern times, and the fact to us affords a perfectly sufficient reason why a great deal of the poetry produced under such conditions has never risen above mediocrity. There are perhaps few things in themselves more irrecoverably prosaic than doubt. Few, on the other hand, more evocative of the poetic faculty, or more susceptible of poetical treatment, than faith.

Doubt disintegrates, disperses, repels. Faith attracts and knits together. It acts as a kind of centre of gravitation in the planetary system of things ideal, controlling the most erratic of orbits: standing



to the intellect in much the same overmastering relation that Cresida's love stood to all her other feelings, when she declares—

“My love  
Is as the very centre of the earth  
Drawing all things to it.”

Faith is the tonic of the poetical scale, the key-note to which the most wildly discursive imagination must return in the end before the ear can rest satisfied. Hence we have absolutely no poetry in which doubt is anything like the central or dominant interest; while we have, as in the Hebrew poetry, as gorgeous palaces as imagination ever sanctified, whose material is supplied and whose genius is inspired from faith alone. When doubt is made use of at all in poetry, as in that highest quotable example, the Book of Job, it is introduced more as a foil to faith—the intense shadow of an intenser light—a wrestler brought into the arena only to be overthrown by his mightier opponent. Doubt can command no prolonged sympathy, and consequently can find no permanent footing in any of the higher places of poetry. Faith, on the contrary, seems to clothe itself with poetry without effort; attracts all poetry to it as a seemingly natural consequence; interwinds and interweaves its life with it, until—to use the strong Shakespearian phrase—the two have “grown together,” and their parting would be “a tortured body.” They are the dermis and the epidermis of the ideal anatomy, and their severance means mutilation. Poetry can find no more than a partial and passing attraction in anything that is doubtful; she is at best but a stranger and a pilgrim in the debatable land. Her final election and abiding home is faith. She clings to faith as a child to a mother, and will not be shaken off, as plainly

as if she had declared, once for all, *thy God shall be my God, and thy people my people.*

The poetical scepticism of the present day has of course retired from the gloomy atheism of the beginning of the century. The old controversies, deistical and theistical, have nearly died out in literature. The world at length seems to have lost patience with the philosophy that does not at least postulate a god of some kind or another to begin with; at all events, any such philosophy has been left high and dry by the poetical tide of the present generation. And, to tell the truth, there was no choice. One or other must perish: they could not live together. The dewless desert of blank and barren denial was no place for the gentle muse. Imagination cannot breathe its atmosphere and live. And yet, though not present themselves, these old controversies have left us an inheritance. The times have changed, and we have changed with them. The gloomy, not to say stagey atheism that had a certain fascination for the youth of thirty or forty years ago, has given place in our day to a refined and vaguely idealistic pantheism, which, without any of the old obtrusion of unbelief (it has even a kind of niggardly recognition of a personal God about it), still exercises a limiting influence on poetry—a weaker solution of the strong waters of atheism, not so objectionable as the old form, on account of what it admits of evil, as of what it excludes of good. Without attempting any hard-church definition of its influence—and indeed we question much if many of its poetical exponents themselves could give a perfectly lucid account of what they believe and what they do not believe—we are yet of opinion that it puts a limitation on genius, and especially on poetical genius, in nearly the

same proportion that it falls short of a definite faith.

Leaving all moral considerations out of sight as not within our province, it seems to be necessary, for æsthetical reasons alone, that the poet, of all other artists, should possess a belief that shall at least be clear to himself. Above all other men it behoves him, in the words of one of the greatest of his brotherhood, to be—

“One in whom persuasion and belief  
Has ripened into faith, and faith become  
A passionate intuition.”

There is a certain degree of heat at which language fuses, and becomes the possible vehicle of poetical feeling, and the point of liquefaction is never registered below conviction, but above it. We do not say conviction is all that is necessary. Oxygen itself would quickly consume life, yet a man must consume oxygen to live. Conviction alone will not produce poetry, but it is an essential component of the atmosphere in which alone poetry can be sustained. At the degree in the mental thermometer which chronicles conviction, the possibility of poetry begins. Anything below that lacks one of the first conditions of its existence.

The poetry that has been produced without due regard to this essential quality, has seldom outlived its own generation; and, in fact, any attempt to get the materials of poetry out of half belief, argues a defective poetical perception at the outset.

It is possible indeed, leaping to the opposite extreme, to get something like poetry out of the gigantic and passionate denial of Satan himself, as Milton has abundantly proved; or even, to a certain degree, out of the pagan abhorrence to the God of Christianity, as illustrated by a living poet. For, waiving altogether any question as to the moral fitness of rehabilitating even under an im-

personal or dramatic mask that which, in the hearing of the majority of his audience, can only be regarded as flat blasphemy, there can be no doubt that Mr Swinburne has reached his highest poetical possibility in what we may classify as his ethnical poems. Without troubling ourselves about whether the inspiration comes from above or below, there is a force about his audacious profanity that we do not so readily find in his other efforts. Good or bad, Mr Swinburne's capacity for blasphemy is unquestionably *une qualité*, as the French would say, with their subtle substratum of meaning.

In the hands of a poet like Milton, the Titanic war against heaven is capable of a certain amount of diabolical picturesqueness; but the merely human unbelief, the distracting doubt, and the shuffling ingenuity that nibbles at this creed and that without arriving at any definite conviction of its own, is the most unpoetical thing in the world.

No amount of artistic skill can make its effusions pleasing. Seeking sympathy and finding none, they seem to be all conceived in the melancholy minor, without any of the natural plaintiveness of that key, and with a double share of its hopeless dejection. There appears to be a place in the realms of the imagination for either God or devil; but upon the Laodicean lukewarmness, upon the apathetic neutrality that is neither cold nor hot, poetry turns her back.

To trace the effects of scepticism, and the stern limitation put upon poetical genius by the want of that faith which ripens into Wordsworth's “passionate intuition,” would open up too wide a field, extending as it does through all the infinite phases and degrees of doubt, from the first shadowy suggestion down to the ultimate utter denial. But that



each step downward is hurtful in its degree, whatever disguise it assumes, could be easily proved. Even the affectation of atheism, as in much of Byron's poetry, is an artistic expedient fraught with infinite danger to the user of it. Although one feels that the atheism of Byron is not real, but in most cases a mere stage property, one gets thoroughly sick of it before all his scowling heroes: the Laras, the Corsairs, the Giaours are painted in on the same gloomy and threadbare background—a varied fugue on the one everlasting theme—a change of costume, but the same old unhallowed anatomy visibly sticking through. Nothing short of the genius of Byron could have achieved even a partial success with such a clogging nightmare on its back.

It is perhaps not to be so much regretted that atheism should prove such a complete extinguisher to anything like second-rate poetical power, as that it should have sometimes dragged down to the second place gifts that should have ranked with the highest. It overshadows the resplendent genius of Shelley like a black thunder-cloud above a rainbow, and gives everything he has left behind him a phantasmagoric and evanescent character. Reading his works is like walking through the dreamlike palace of Kubla Khan. On every side, and in such profusion as has never been approached by man, lie the potentialities of poetry, but yet in a great measure only the potentialities. He has left no palace behind him worthy of his genius or his materials. If ever mortal had the materials, and the power of the enchanter to call them forth, it was he. No one ever possessed in a greater degree the faculty of bringing himself *en rapport* with the hallucination of the moment.

Images of the most ethereal ten-

uity, that would have presented themselves to other men's minds in some vague and nebulous way, stood forth to the order of that imperial imagination with the distinctness and precision of objective realities. And yet with all this power he is still but the enchanter. Wherever you go it is fairy-world still, and affords no solid ground for mortal foot; and though you cannot resist its haunting beauty, you are equally haunted by a sense of its almost ghastly unreality. The kindred points of heaven and home are even more nearly akin than they are commonly supposed. Shelley's inability to conceive a heaven with a God in it to whom he could pay reverence, seemed to drain away all humanness and homeliness out of him, until his poetry became quite as unearthly as his adverse critics judged it unheavenly. Starving one side of his moral nature, the other side was supersaturated, and rendered morbid by an overflow of the imaginative secretions that should have fed both. This insubstantial characteristic of his work was unfortunately one upon which Shelley rather prided himself. Writing to a friend, he says he "does not deal in flesh and blood." "You might as well," says he, "go to a gin-shop for a leg of mutton, as expect anything earthly from me." That want of fixity, too, which the absence of central faith invariably induces, that want of a peaceable mental anchorage—the green pastures and the still waters of the Hebrew poet, with whom, however, he has so much in common—acts as a continual drag on his powers. There is a provoking absence of that massive and leonine repose which usually consorts with the greatest gifts, and which one naturally looks for as a concomitant of his. But we look for it in vain. He was always in an ecstasy, in the

somewhat lost but literal meaning of the word—always *out of himself*. If his genius had a fault, it was too impressionable. The merest mouthful of the Delphian vapour put him into fits. He was ever on the tripod, and is only a modern incarnation of that priestess of Apollo, mentioned by Plutarch, who raved herself to death in the temple. His Pegasus in this way was good for a short run, but had little waiting power. Consequently, the defect does not interfere with the perfection of his shorter lyrics, which are simply unique and unapproached; but its limiting influence is painfully apparent in all his works (though less marked in the *Cenci*) that require any long sustained effort. The deficiency was one well understood and keenly felt by Shelley himself. In a letter to Godwin, he says,—“I cannot but be conscious, in much of what I write, of an absence of that tranquillity which is the attribute and accompaniment of power.”

Sad indeed that this defect, this want of reference to the fundamental key-note of power, should have marred the music of such an otherwise heavenly instrument.

That the atheism—or at least the pantheism—of Shelley, was a mental unsoundness of a constitutional and hereditary kind, does not, we think, admit of a doubt. In these days of irresponsible faultiness, studded over with dipso- and klepto-maniacs, when so many are anxious to prove that we are “villains by necessity,” as Shakespeare would have put it,—“fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance,”—we have often wondered that some charitable *doctrinaire* with a scientific turn of mind has never started his atheo-maniac. If the world could be convinced—and there is no lack of plausible argument to prove it—that

the different degrees of unbelief are frequently no more than the varied phases of mental disorder, and that absolute atheism itself, in the vast majority of cases, is only an irresponsible mania, proceeding from sheer intellectual defect,—if we could only have it settled that our sceptics, and more especially our cultured and scientific sceptics, are what they are by “a divine thrusting on,” they might possibly be taught to hold their views with a little more humbleness of mind than they have hitherto done. In Shelley’s case, atheism was a thing that ran in the blood. His father seems to have had a fame for eccentricity in the direction of profanity, and was said to have been a disciple of the Chesterfield and Rochefoucauldian school; while Shelley himself declares—in an unpublished letter quoted by Mr Rossetti—that his grandfather, old Sir Bysshe, “was a complete atheist, and *founded all his hopes on annihilation*.”

To a somewhat similar cause—the want of any deep-rooted conviction in the author’s mind—may be attributed, we think, a great deal of that watery and Wertherian instability that characterises too many of Goethe’s heroes, although in his case in a more modified degree. Goethe’s unbelief did not kick at heaven as Shelley’s did in the *Prometheus*. His scepticism was of a milder and more passive type, or perhaps it might be more accurately described as a kind of moral *juste milieu*, with a singular inaccessibility to attraction on one side or the other. His moral sense was insulated, so to speak—encased by a coating of intellect which was an absolute non-conductor. There is no better representative than he of the spirit described by Tennyson as

“Holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all.”

With less of this power to main-



tain an attitude of moral neutrality, Goethe's own character, as well as that of many of those he created, would have been much more humanly and poetically complete. His shortcoming in the direction of personal faith cannot be kept down, and is continually cropping out in his heroes. In many of the leading men he has drawn there is hardly any strong moral aspiration, and in some no discoverable preference or predilection whatever. The only exception to this we can think of is in the character of "Goetz von Berlichingen," and that was a production almost of the author's boyhood, or at least at an age before men have begun to question or doubt. There was evidently a lurking suspicion in Goethe's maturer mind that anything like well-defined religious views in a man argued weakness, and weakness was the one vice Goethe abhorred, even to a weakness. But that he was equally well convinced, on the other hand, that no feminine character could possibly be complete without such views, may be as safely inferred. His women are singularly rich by the very excess of those qualities of faith and trust so conspicuously awanting in his men.

This absence of any kind of moral partiality in the author found its counterpart in the moral tenuity and aimless vacillation of Werther, Egmont, Wilhelm Meister, and Faust. Beside the intense purpose of Shakespeare's heroes, such men as these are little better than shadows. Even in the presence of Shakespeare's secondary characters—of his villains even—we are never altogether out of an atmosphere of faith. Among the very worst there is an implied recognition of God, a power without and beyond them, in an accusing if not approving conscience.

Without any of that modern

moral attitudinising that pirouettes on a pivot of its own self-consciousness (and which the world could so well do without), no man's work carries upon it more clearly and unmistakably the marks of an overruling conviction and a dominant purpose. So evident is this quality in Shakespeare's works that one might almost imagine that—like every fresh effort of Haydn's genius—they were commenced with prayer and carried out under the power of old Herbert's motto—

"Think the king sees thee still, for his King does."

Perhaps the most striking illustration in more modern times of the manner in which the poetical faculty may be overriden and paralysed by the action of doubt, is to be found in the life and writings of Arthur Hugh Clough. The more his life is studied, the more it appears to rise above the common conventionality of doubt, and to represent the highest possible phase of conscientious scepticism—one, indeed, of those sacrificial souls which the Creator seems to throw from Him at intervals into the ocean of religious opinion to keep the waters in a healthy fermentation, and save them from stagnating by tradition, or freezing by convention into mere lifeless forms. His case presents many unique and interesting points. Differing from Shelley, inasmuch as the very elements left out in Shelley's half-human composition were amongst Clough's most conspicuous endowments,—the social side of genius—its simple homeliness, and the keenness of its human sympathies—was in him beautifully complete. Differing, again, from the scepticism of Goethe—for Clough's moral predilections were strong, and anything like indifference was with him impossible—his scepticism seemed rather to rise out of an al-

most morbid over-keenness and over-sensitiveness to the requirements of conscience. With a strong and perpetual craving for some solid ground of belief, he would yet have no part of his faith at second hand. Following Clough's career from his school-days at Rugby onwards, it is a melancholy and even a humiliating thing to find how much even of the unseen and spiritual force of a great man's mind is overruled by the irresponsible circumstance of its earthly surroundings. With all its unquestionable excellences, there was a fatal flaw in the Rugby training under the Arnold *régime*. In many cases—and these cases necessarily the most important—it had a tendency to over-stimulate the moral sense. It sent boys out into the world with a dangerously premature moral equipment; an education that yielded a good deal of dogmatic brain-force, but at the sacrifice of intellectual accuracy and the finer moral discriminations. An old head upon young shoulders is a doubtful blessing in any case; but when it takes the special form of an adult faith grafted on a spiritual anatomy whose bones are set not yet, there is no doubt in the matter. With the great majority of strong natures, it is simply the best conceivable arrangement for ultimate moral shipwreck. Not the most carefully administered education, accompanied by the utmost solicitude of parents, can ever take that highest part of every man's education out of the hands of his Maker. Father or mother or teacher may in some measure mould the outward frame, but God alone can breathe into its nostrils the breath of life, and make such an education a living thing. Clough (who by the inherent tendency of his nature would have been a seeker after God, had he had no higher advantages than a heathen)

has always seemed to us to have been the victim of a premature moral development. He came from Rugby with the Arnold mint-marks fresh and strong upon him, with his mind fully made up, and an amiable determination to do battle, if need be, for all the theories of his worthy master. But man proposes, God disposes. A moral influence was lying in wait for him that he had never taken into account, and which proved to be the turning-point of his life. When he went into residence at Oxford in 1836, the Tractarian movement was at its height. Newman was stretching out, through pulpit and platform, through verse and prose, those subtle prehensile tentacles of his, that touched so softly, and yet have closed so firmly, upon modern thought. It was an atmosphere Clough had never breathed before, and it proved too much for his tender years. Speaking of it afterwards, he says that for a long time he was "like a straw drawn up the draught of a chimney."

The fierce struggle he passed through can never be altogether known, and is only shadowed here and there in his poems, and a few chance exclamations in his correspondence; but of the severity of it there can be no doubt. His mind was not altogether unhorsed—he had too firm a seat for that—but he may be said to have lost his stirrups, and never again to have recovered them until the harrowing interregnum that dates between doubt and well-assured belief had done its work upon him, and worn him down to the brink of the grave. Torture like his turns the confident cant of your easy-minded believer into something that almost approaches blasphemy.

All that he suffered in that pitiless purgatory will never be revealed—that valley of the shadow of



death, so thickly strewn with the bones of the spiritually dead, by what inscrutable decree of Providence we know not ; but that all was borne without a murmur, and with a rare humility and integrity, his life is a sufficient guarantee. With all his doubts and difficulties, we should be inclined to question the catholicity of the Church that refused to extend to him the invitation of Laban, "*Come in, thou blessed of the Lord : why standest thou without ?*"

But for the fate that brought him so directly under the wheels of the Tractarian movement, he might have been living yet ; and few, who have paid his works any attention, will doubt but that he would have been one of the greatest of living men. That this unfortunate interruption and harassing mental conflict fatally interfered with his æsthetic development as a successful poet, is very abundantly proved by nearly all the poetry he has written. He carried his doubts about him by force of habit, and not least doubted his own powers, and the quality of his own productions. His doubts to him indeed

"Were traitors,  
And made him lose the good he might  
have won,  
By fearing to attempt."

He kept his most important poem, the "*Amours de Voyage*," in MS. beside him for nine years, and only published it at last in a kind of modestly furtive way in an American periodical — the '*Atlantic Monthly*.' His doubt seemed to find him out and to hunt him to cover whenever and wherever he ventured out. He could not escape it. There was nothing left for him, but, in his own melancholy words, "to pace the sad confusion through." Baffled and tempest-tost by conflict-

ing opinions, he exclaims, in one of his poems :—

"O may we for assurance' sake  
Some arbitrary judgment take,  
And wilfully pronounce it true."

We almost wish he could have done so, even at some little intellectual sacrifice. But that was just the thing he could not do. He was too keenly suspicious of his intellectual life. With him there was no deeper form of dishonesty than that which shrinks from its own conviction. There never was a character more spotlessly free from anything even approaching compromise in this respect. His intellectual honesty was without a flaw. Everything went down before his convictions — his living at Oxford (it should not be forgot that in his position pecuniary sacrifice meant poverty), and with it, in many men's eyes, his social status as well. And last, what to him was of far more value than these, the confidence of his dearest friends, and at the head of the list Arnold himself. Happiness, health, all went ; and in their place, to use a phrase of his own, came "spiritual vertigo and megrims unutterable," and loneliness and misery. Everything his conscience required of him was paid down to the last farthing. All was given away, till only his great unrooted honesty remained to him. Religion would indeed be a rhapsody of words if in such a case a man could not spend his life and yet in the highest sense possess it. *Whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.* It is a beautiful belief, and it never was beat out into the metal of actual hard fact with a sublimer self-denial than in the life of Clough.

## THE PHILOSOPHER'S BABY.

I HAD been considering for about a year whether I should marry Winifred Hanway, when I heard that she was engaged to the Philosopher. Why did she accept him? It is true that he is both imaginative and critical; but faculties exercised in the formation of psychological hypotheses and the laborious destruction of those of one's neighbour, do not usually rouse the sympathy of a bright and beautiful girl, who is more fit to live than to think about life. He is certainly handsome, but as certainly his clothes are barbarous. His trousers cannot keep their shape for a day, and his hats are never new. If he notices the rain, he opens an umbrella which might have served as an ineffectual protection at the time of the Deluge; if he finds out that it is cold, he assumes a garment which might have been the everyday coat of Methuselah. His manners are as strange as his appearance. He may often be seen walking in the Park at the fashionable hour with a far-off look in his eyes, and his hat thrust back as if to lessen the external pressure on his active brain; more rarely you may hear him bursting into enthusiasm in Piccadilly, though Piccadilly is the last place in which a man should allow himself to be enthusiastic. In short, though he is a true friend, he is an uncomfortable acquaintance; and his volcanic utterances, after long periods of calm contemplation, cause such shocks to one's nerves as would be conveyed to the Sunday citizen by the eruption of Primrose Hill. But if it was odd that the beautiful Winifred Hanway should marry my friend, it was yet more odd that he should marry any one. There were no topics more certain to excite an explosion in

the philosopher than the excessive population of the country, and the wholesome solitude of the Thinker. "How," he would fiercely ask, "can a man think effectually on fundamental subjects, who is compelled by the despicable circumstances of his life to exhaust his analytical faculty in considering how to pay his butcher and when to buy his coals? I tell you, sir, it's better to starve with cold and hunger than to debase one's noblest part to a game of skill with a grasping grocer." Again and again I had heard him declaim in this preposterous fashion; and after all, he was going to the altar like any other victim, and would doubtless take a house upon his back with the docility of a snail.

I could not solve the problem; I would not give it up. So, full of the determination to drag Diogenes out of his tub, and the secret out of Diogenes, I stepped round the corner to offer my congratulations. My friend was in his study apparently writing, really eating a quill pen. He rose at me with a rush, wrung my hand till it ached, and blushed rather uncomfortably. Congratulations are the curse of the Briton. Whether he is offering them or receiving them, he is generally obliged to take refuge in intermittent hand-shaking, and most of his sentences tail off into grunts and groans. But on this occasion it was evident that the philosopher had something ready to say, and was nervously anxious to say it. Indeed I had hardly said more than "My dear fellow, I don't know when . . . I really am so awfully glad, I . . . it's in every way so, such a satisfactory, you know . . . I really do wish all possible, and all that sort of thing,



you know"—when he burst in with a speech so fluently delivered, that I knew I was not his earliest visitor that morning. "Of course it's taken you by surprise," he said, "as I knew it would; but the truth is, that I have been thinking of it for a long time, and I am sure I am right." Here I tried to get in an expression of wonder at his new notion of duty, but he was bent on being rid of the matter, and hurried on to his reasons. "In the first place," said he, "I am sure that, instead of increasing my domestic worries, my marriage will transfer them in a body to my wife; and, secondly, when I consider the vast number of fools who are every day born into the world, I am terrified by the picture of what the next generation will be, if the thinkers of this are to be without successors." Having discharged his reasons in this wise, the orator stood blinking at me as if he feared dissent, but I was too astounded by his magnificent audacity to reply. Slowly a look of peace stole back into his face, a pleasant light dawned in his eyes, and the promise of a smile at the corner of his mouth. His remarkable fluency was gone, and indeed his voice sounded quite choky when he said, "Johnny, you don't know what an angel she is." A light broke in upon me. "Philosopher," I said, "I believe you are going to be married because you fell in love?" "Perhaps you are right," said the philosopher.

After the wedding, the philosopher and his wife went abroad for an indefinite period, and their friends heard but little of them. He wrote to nobody, and she did not write to me. Yet there were occasional rumours. Now they were breathing the keen air of the Engadine, now sinking to the chestnuts and vines of Chiavenna; now he was lashing himself to frenzy over the

treasures of Rome; now she was gazing with sweet northern eyes across the glowing splendour of the Bay of Naples. Then they were in Germany, and about to settle for life in a university town; but anon had fled from it in haste after a long night's dispute, in the course of which my learned friend had well-nigh come to blows with the university's most celebrated professor.

At last I heard that they were again in London, and, full of enthusiasm, darted round the corner to welcome them home. Nobody was with them but Mrs Hanway, Winifred's mother. I would enter unannounced, and surprise the philosopher. I entered unannounced, and was surprised myself. Was this the effect of matrimony or of foreign travel? Each occupant of the room was engaged in an exercise wholly unconnected, as it seemed, with those of the rest. My friend's wife, the lady whom I had almost loved, queen of all grace and comeliness, was appearing and disappearing like a flash behind the day's 'Times,' showing at the moments of disclosure a face flushed with excitement, and lustrous coils of hair tumbled into the wildest disorder, while she accompanied the whole performance with strange and inarticulate sounds. Her mother, the same Mrs Hanway who was so perfect a model of dress and carriage that many of her lady friends were wont to lament among themselves that she gave herself such airs, was seated on the floor dressed for walking but without her bonnet. Yes, she was certainly drumming on an inverted tea-tray with the wrong end of the poker. And the philosopher? It was perplexing, after three years' separation, to meet him thus. The philosopher was cantering round the room on all-fours, wearing on his head his own waste-paper basket. Briskly he cantered round, ever and anon frisking like

a lamb in spring-time, until he reached my feet, which were rooted to the spot with astonishment. He glanced up sideways, rose with a cry to the normal attitude of man, and grasped me by the hand. At the sound of his voice, his wife dropping the paper from her hands raised them quickly to her hair; and his mother-in-law, with as much dignity as the effort would allow, scrambled on to her feet. Then in an instant the cause of their eccentric conduct was made clear. Throned upon the hearthrug, and showing by a gracious smile a few of the newest teeth, sat a fine baby of some fifteen months. In one dimpled fist was tightly clenched the brush, which had so neatly arranged the mother's braids; while the other was engaged in pounding the grandmother's best bonnet into a shapeless mass.

We were all somewhat embarrassed except the baby. The ladies knew that they were untidy, and I that I was an intruder. As for the learned father, he stood now on one leg and now on the other, while he shifted the waste-paper basket from hand to hand, and continued to smile almost as perseveringly as his amiable offspring. Yet it was he who at last put an end to our awkward position by expressing a wild desire to have my opinion of the new curtains in his study. Rather sheepishly I said good-bye to the lady of the house, trying to express by my eyes that I would never call again unannounced. I knew that Mrs Hanway had not forgiven me, as I humbly took the two fingers which she offered; and I felt like a brute, as the most important member of the family condescended to leave a damp spot by the edge of my left whisker.

When, however, I had been swept down-stairs by my impulsive friend, and was alone with him in his den, my courage returned, and with it

some indignation. I confronted him, and sternly asked why I had not been told that he was a father. "Not been told?" echoed he; "do you mean to say that you did not know about the Baby?" "Not so much as that it was," I replied, gloomily. He was overwhelmed: of course he had supposed that every one knew it from the Queen downwards. Of course fifty people ought to have told me, who of course had told me everything else. At last my curiosity got the better of my indignation, and I cut short his apologies by beginning my questions—"Does the shape of its head content you?" I asked. "The shape of whose what?" cried the philosopher, apparently too surprised for grammar. "Of the baby's head, of course," I replied, tartly; "I merely wish to know if the child is likely to be as intellectual as you hoped." "Isn't the hair lovely?" he asked, inconsequently. This was too much, and assuming my severest manner I delivered myself in this wise—"I thought, though no doubt I was wrong, that the use of a baby to you would be partly to furnish you with raw material for a philosopher, partly to enable you by constant observation to gain further evidence bearing on such vexed questions as, whether the infant gains its idea of space by feeling about, whether it is conscious of itself, &c." "Well," he said, laughing, "I don't expect much help from my infant in those matters, unless I can get inside her and think her thoughts." "Her thoughts?" cried I, in amazement; "you don't mean to say it's a girl? Good gracious! you are not going to educate a female philosopher?" He looked rather vexed. "Of course it's a girl," he said. "The father of a female philosopher!" I gasped. "Dear me!" said he, somewhat testily; "isn't it enough to be father of a noble woman?"



Now I have often put up with a great deal from my learned friend, and am quite aware that I have been spoken of as "Bozzy" behind my back. But there is a turning-point even for the worm, and nobody will sit for ever at the feet which are constantly kicking him. I had been snubbed more than enough by this illogical parent, and assuming my most sarcastic manner, I inquired, with an appearance of deference—"Is it not rather early to speak of your daughter as a noble woman?"

"Not at all," said the philosopher.

I had kept aloof from the philosopher for some weeks, nursing my wrath, like Achilles I said to myself—cross as a bear, I overheard my landlady say in the passage—when I received a hasty note begging me to come to him at once. I fancied myself summoned to a council of chiefs; so, having donned my shining armour, I left my tent with fitting dignity, and descended with a clang into the plain. Yet I could not but be aware of my landlady's eye piercing me through the crack of the parlour-door purposely left ajar, and of the hasty flapping of loose slippers which told the startled slavey's flight into the abyss below.

An unusual silence held my friend's house that morning. The door was opened, before I had time to ring, by a melancholy footman, who, walking before me with the elaborate delicacy of an Agag, noiselessly ushered me into the study. It was my lot to be again rooted to the spot with amazement. By the book-case, in a shaded corner of the room, with his head bowed low upon his hands, knelt the philosopher. Here was a long step from the siege of Troy, from the simple wrath of a childlike hero to the most complex embarrassment of an heir of all the ages.

What should I do? The dismal menial had fled to the shades, without a word, without even a glance into the room. If I retreated, I left my friend unaided, and remained ignorant of the cause of his strange conduct. If I advanced, I was again the intruder on a scene not prepared for my inspection. In an agony of hesitation I fell to brushing my hat with my elbow; but not finding the expected relief in the occupation, I was about to desist, when my hat decided what my head could not, by falling with a crack on the floor. The effect was electrical. Without one glance at the intruder, the philosopher made a grab at the nearest bookshelf, dragged out a volume which had not been touched for half a century, and hunted for nothing in its pages with frantic eagerness. He was still at it, when I stood over him and noted without wonder that he held the book upside down; then with the poorest imitation of surprise which I have ever seen, he rose and grasped my hand. "You found me on the track of something," he said; "I was looking it out in—in——"

Here it occurred to him that he did not know the name of the venerable tome which he had so rudely disturbed; and with a heightened colour and a sudden change of manner he turned quickly to me and said, "My child is ill." I felt positively guilty. I had been angry with that baby for making my wise friend foolish, for not being a boy, for being called "a noble woman." Was it not shameful that a great hulking brute should sneer at a weak thing that could not even answer with a taunt? Were not my clumsy sarcasms enough to crush so delicate a plant? The poor little "noble woman" was in danger, and I could do nothing to help her. There were tears in the eyes which were

looking into mine for comfort ; but I had nothing ready to say.

"I could not stand being alone," he muttered, after a short silence ; "the doctor is with her now, and in a moment I may hear that my little daughter must—in fact may hear the worst."

While he was speaking, I seemed to have fifty consoling remarks to offer ; but when he stopped, no one sentence would disengage itself from the rest. What I blurted out at last seems almost ridiculous as I look back on it.

"You must hope for the best," I said ; "you know she has youth on her side."

The words were scarcely out of my mouth when I heard a measured step upon the stairs ; presently the door was opened by the noiseless footman, and the most famous of London doctors entered the room. My friend leaned heavily on my arm, but looked at the man of science with seeming calm.

"I am happy to say," said the physician, cheerily, "that our little friend is going on as well as possible."

"And she is out of danger?"

"She never was in it."

"Never in danger?" cried I, almost disappointed.

"She has nothing the matter with her," he replied, "but a slight feverish cold. I have seldom seen a finer or more healthy child. Good morning."

I never was more annoyed. Here was a waste of my finest feelings. Here was I stirred to the depth, well nigh moved to tears, by a baby's feverish cold. Of course I was very glad that it was no worse ; but my friend was too absurd, and I would not spare him.

"Won't you resume your studies?" I asked, sarcastically, pointing to the disturbed book, which was lying

on the ground at our feet. His humility might have disarmed me : "I am afraid I've been a fool," he said ; "but if you had seen her all flushed and breathing hard ; and then she is so small and fragile."

"Yes, for a noble woman," I remarked ; he received the dart meekly. "Philosopher," said I, suddenly, determined to rouse him at any cost, "when I entered this room, you were engaged in prayer." His colour certainly deepened. "May I ask," I inquired with an appearance of deference, "whether you were addressing yourself to the Personal First Cause, or to the Unknowable—but perhaps you were merely bowing to the rational order of the Universe?"

He made a gesture of impatience, but answered still with studied moderation, "I was alone and in trouble."

"And the efficacy of prayer?" I asked.

"For heaven's sake," cried he, bursting into excitement, "stop your jargon ! Nothing shows such ignorance of a subject as having all its cant phrases on the tip of your tongue. Can't I speak to God without expecting to be paid for it?"

This was turning the tables. If he was going to take to questions, I knew I should end by admitting myself a fool. So to avoid a Socratic dialogue I put my hand on my friend's shoulder and said : "You are a good man, philosopher ; may you and the 'noble woman' live a thousand years."

"Thank you," he said, simply ; "and now you must let me go and sing a pæan with the nobler woman, my patient Penelope, my sweet wife."

So he went with long strides over the asphodel meadow, and I betook myself to my tent full of pleasant thoughts.



## THE MINOR KING OF MYSORE.

IN his book entitled 'Eastern Experiences,' Mr Lewin Bowring, late Chief Commissioner of Mysore, brought the history of that province up to the date when the present ruler, who is a minor, was placed in the charge of the guardian appointed by the British Government; up to that date the education of the little chief had not commenced. He had but once emerged from the seclusion of the house his family occupied in the Fort of Mysore. He had been surrounded by reactionary influences. He was then but little over six years old, small for his age, but, as described by Mr Bowring, "not dark, but of a rich olive complexion, with most splendid eyes." Since then more than four years have elapsed. The little chief must be close upon eleven years old. How have the pledges made on his behalf by the British Government been, in the interval, fulfilled? We ask this question with the most complete intention of answering it fully. Fortunately it is easy for us to do so. India is no longer a *terra incognita* to travellers. Some of these travellers,—attracted partly, possibly, by its vicinity to the lovely Nilghéri mountains; partly by the beautiful and varied landscape scenery for which Coorg is famous; partly, perhaps, by the desire to explore the still curious remains of Seringapatam; possibly, also, by the temperate and even climate, which renders the province of Mysore so salubrious for Europeans,—have not failed to visit the capital which gave its name to the province—to explore its curiosities—and, above all, to pay their respects to the little chief who is being trained to be its ruler. From these and other sources—for there are

no state secrets at Mysore—it is easy to obtain details of the recent history of the province. We are enabled then, without difficulty, to present to our readers a succinct account of the mode in which the declared intentions of the British Government are being carried out.

There are few subjects, we think, connected with the administration of India, which more demand attention than this. Never did the British Government bind itself more solemnly to an act of restitution than on the occasion when it engaged to restore Mysore, after a certain lapse of years, to the adopted heir of the late Raja. But one condition was attached to this promise, and it was a condition the fulfilment of which rested mainly with the British Government. This was that the young chief should be so educated as to be fit to rule. Having before it the fact—the unfortunate fact—that the late Raja, nominated when a minor, after the fall of Seringapatam in 1799, was shamefully neglected in all matters of education; that, though under British guardianship, he had no education at all; and that his ill success as a ruler was traceable to that fatal want;—it is clear that in imposing this condition the British Government made itself responsible for its fulfilment. The pledge given in Parliament by Sir Stafford Northcote was given in the face of India, and before Europe. Its importance in the eyes of the natives of India cannot be exaggerated. The concession, as it was called, to Indian public opinion, made a deep impression upon all thinking men in India. And it is impossible to overestimate the mixed feelings of jealousy, of suspicion, and of interest,

with which the experiment is being watched.

What, then, has been done? Much, undoubtedly, if we take a purely English view of the question. But an immense deal, if we take cognisance of the difficulties specially attaching to a part of India in which the rites and ceremonies peculiar to the Hindus are practised with the greatest austerity, and where a hatred of innovation is carried to an extent it would seem difficult to realise in life. In this sort of existence the most opposite contrasts meet. One finds a love of outward pomp and splendour combined with domestic discomfort at which the poorest Englishman would grumble; a love of money and jewels joined to an eagerness to squander scarcely to be surpassed; a devotion to forms and ceremonies, an abject submission to priests, united with an indifference to life; a feverish longing for external honours hand in hand with private meanness of the basest order; a belief in the corruptibility of mankind joined with the honourable feeling which forbids a man to betray one who trusts him. Such are some of the characteristics of the Mysoreans. And when we add that they are joined to a firm belief in necromancy, astrology, divination, the power of conjuring away misfortunes, and the converse, we think it will be admitted that the task of a reformer, in such a community, was no light one.

And yet it had to be attempted. To educate the young Raja so as to fit him to be a ruler, it was necessary to remove him as far as possible from influences which, infecting the very atmosphere he breathed, must in time master his spirit,—influences which regarded education as their deadliest enemy. Yet it seemed difficult to do this. He was little more than six years old;

he occupied a house in the fort with a widowed mother, two brothers, and a sister, all older than himself; relatives and dependants, all belonging to the reactionary school, had constant access to him. His mother, an excellent woman in her way, was, like all the women of Mysore, entirely under the influence of the priests. Under such circumstances, but little good could be hoped for by the adoption of the plan of sending daily into the fort a tutor to give instruction to the young chief. Even supposing that the tutor had been superior to the prejudices of his race, was it probable that his teaching would counterbalance the impressions hourly forced upon the youthful mind? That was not to be hoped for, and was, in fact, impossible.

Yet insuperable difficulties seemed to present themselves to the alternative design of removing the young prince to a place where he would be less amenable to the influences we have mentioned. To take a child of such tender years from the guardianship of his mother was, at the moment, not to be thought of. Such a course, in the absence of any overt act of contumacy on the part of the mother, would have given birth to a feeling of discontent and excitement which it would have been difficult to allay.

There seemed, however, a third course. This consisted in removing him for a certain number of hours every day to a house outside the fort, where he could be instructed. And this was the course the Guardian proposed to adopt. Yet no sooner was it mentioned, than, as it would seem, it was met by numberless objections. It appeared to the Mysorean mind that the king ought not to go to education, but that education should come to the king. Then, again, it was impos-



sible that the king should ever enter any carriage but a state-carriage; should ever drive unless attended by a large cavalry escort, and eighty running footmen, and preceded by men proclaiming his titles. Such, declared the orthodox, had been the unvarying custom under the late reign, and the customs of Mysore were as invariable as those of the Medes and the Persians.

Yet, after all, the difficulty was overcome. It would appear that, in all his efforts, the Guardian received the strenuous support and assistance of an enlightened Brahmin, C. Runga Charlis by name, a native of Madras, and who had been selected by Mr Bowring to fill the office of Controller of the Palace. Never was a happier choice made. Mr Runga Charlis, who is well known to the writer of these pages, is one of the noblest men that ever lived. Possessing a simple, unaffected nature, a warm and generous heart, full of sympathy with the suffering, he had, too, a clear head, a well-stored and vigorous understanding, and a wonderful knowledge of character. He was just the man for the position. Though a Brahmin of the highest caste, he was not bound by the prejudices of Brahminism. It was his creed that a man should cast aside all differences of opinion when dealing with mankind; that men should be judged less by their words than by their acts; and that there was one essential thing in this world, and one only, to strive for, and that was—the right.

It was fortunate that between this gentleman and the Guardian there existed, on all essential points, a community of sentiment; and it was by their united efforts that the difficulties we have alluded to were overcome. It happened that outside the fort there was an

unoccupied palace, called the Summer Palace. It had spacious grounds attached to it, and it was in every respect well suited to the purpose for which it was destined. This was, to use it as a school: not a school for the Maharaja only, but for himself, his relations, and the sons of all the officers of state. There could be no possible use, it had occurred to the Guardian, in educating the Maharaja only, if his relations, and those with whom, in mature life, he would have to associate, were left uncared for. It was determined, then, that all the sons of the nobles and high officers of state should be summoned to attend daily at the school where the Maharaja was to learn his lessons; that they should sit in the same class, take places, and learn from the same books; that they should join in the same games; and, in fact, should be associated together just as are the boys in the great public schools of England.

This resolution having been arrived at, all minor difficulties vanished. The reactionary party consoled themselves with the idea that, after all, the new schoolroom was a palace; and they were content to think with less regret upon the absence of the running footmen, and all but a very moderate escort, when they were assured that the Viceroy seldom had a larger following. They hoped, too, that the education would prove to be a mere formality, and that they would be able, in the privacy of the house, to instil their own views into the yet unformed mind of the chief.

When, after a few months, these hopes proved delusive, attempts were made, not once or twice, but repeatedly, to shake off the yoke of education, and to reintroduce the lax system prevailing under the previous reign. But the strong support given by the Chief Com-

missioner, Mr Lewin Bowring, to the Guardian, enabled him to meet and baffle all these efforts. It was not, however, till the month of April 1870, that the determined energy of the late Lord Mayo dealt them a final and a fatal blow. That Viceroy, seeing that half measures would endanger the success of the experiment, and cripple the action of his lieutenant on the spot, gave to the Guardian his full and cordial support, bestowing upon him, at the same time, complete authority to act as he deemed for the best on any sudden emergency. From that moment, all, apparently, has been plain sailing. The reactionists lost heart, and gave in. And it has since required but a firm and steady handling of the reins to steer the team clear of every obstacle in the direct road for the ultimate goal.

Four years have now elapsed since the school was established, and the progress it has made is surprising. It admitted boys of all ages, the only proviso being that they should be sons of nobles or of high officers of state. They number about sixty, and the ages vary from eight to seventeen. They are divided into four classes. The first includes the boys, fourteen in number, who have made the greatest progress, and of ages varying from eleven to seventeen. Some of these may have learnt a smattering of English at the local schools before the Maharaja's school was established. It was, however, but a smattering; and it is a remarkable fact that all these have been passed by boys who started, so to speak, fair. At the time of the establishment of the Maharaja's school—September 1869—none of the boys who had studied at the local schools could speak English. They could read and write and spell fairly, but nothing more. Now, after four years' continued study, they can, as

a rule, express themselves well in English. They have read and mastered the histories of the different countries of Europe and of India; they know geography thoroughly; in arithmetic and algebra they have made remarkable progress; whilst they understand thoroughly the three first books of Euclid. The second class is composed of boys varying in age from twelve to seventeen. Many of these entered the school some months subsequently to its formation—a fact which accounts, with respect to some of them, for their not being in the first class. They number nineteen. They have advanced in arithmetic as far as decimals, and have made good progress in history, in geography, and in grammar. In this class is the second brother of the Maharaja, about sixteen years old, a well-behaved boy, much liked by his comrades, but not remarkable for ability.

In the third class, numbering also nineteen boys, is the little Maharaja. Here they have mastered simple and compound arithmetic, reading, writing, and spelling, whilst fair progress has been made in history, and very great progress in geography. The little Maharaja is, as we have said, fast approaching the age of eleven years. Some of his class companions may be two or three years older, but only two are younger than he. He is a sturdy, well-built young fellow, his face expressing intelligence. He is very fond of the school, and pays great attention to his lessons. At the monthly examinations he has been, for a long time past, always amongst the first four—often, indeed, first of all. His strong point is geography, in which he is unrivalled in the class. His weakest point is dictation, but in this, as well as in arithmetic, in which he was also backward, he has lately made considerable



strides. His intellect seems rather solid than brilliant, but he has a most retentive memory. The result is, that though he learns with difficulty, all that he does learn is well impressed on his memory, and may be said to be stored in his mind. He was for some time much depressed in consequence of the low place he occupied in the class in dictation, but the force of his character showed itself in the energy with which he applied himself to remedy this failing. He succeeded, but showed no exultation at his success. In fact, he is singularly devoid of self-consciousness—a remarkable circumstance, when we take into consideration the adulation which attends him in his private house.

We may mention that there is a fourth class, composed of ten boys, most of them representing the incurably dull elements of the school, though two or three are new-comers. The school hours are from half-past ten to half-past two; and again from half-past three to half-past four. But all the lessons taught during those hours have to be prepared at home; consequently, some of the boys engage private tutors. On the Maharaja and two of his relatives a master attends every morning early, to aid him in the study of the lessons set for the day. It may be calculated, then, that few of the boys study less than seven hours every day, many of them much more.

But it must not be supposed that no play mingles with all this work. Two half-holidays are set apart every week for the exercise of cricket. In this popular game the boys have made great progress, some of them handling the willow in a style which would do no discredit to the public schools of England. One or two of the bigger boys give great promise of becoming fair round-hand bowlers;

whilst in catching, and in fielding generally, they show remarkably good form. The Maharaja plays naturally with the smaller boys, and none shows greater eagerness than he. On the cricket-ground, as in the school, he is simply the equal of his companions. He, like they, wears the inevitable flannel dress, similar to that worn in English schools; and the only difference between their entire costume and that of the boys of an English school is, that the former wear turbans instead of hats, and for the most part dispense with shoes and stockings. At the outset of his cricket career the Maharaja took to bowling, without, however, achieving any great success. But, happening one day to make a good catch, and receiving much applause from his comrades, he has ever since taken his place among the fielders. And here he is quite at home. The interest felt by the boys generally, alike in the school and in the game, may be illustrated by the fact, that on the occasion of her Majesty's birthday, when asked how they would like to spend their holiday, they replied: "Certainly not in our houses; let us have lessons in the morning, and a good game of cricket in the afternoon."

The fact is, Home, in the English sense of the term, is not understood by the Mysoreans. Their homes are houses divided into small, dark, ill-ventilated rooms, and inhabited by querulous, uneducated, priest-ridden women. These care not in the smallest degree for the educational and intellectual progress of the youthful scions of the house, though they do lay great stress upon the dignities and honours bestowed upon them. To hear that one of these scions had gained a step in precedence at the King's Court, no matter the means by which that step might have been obtained,

would convey infinitely more gratification to these bigoted fossils than the receipt of the information that the same scion had taken a degree as Master of Arts. To them innovation is the poisoned dagger. When, towards the close of the year 1870, the *Guardian* took the Maharaja's brother and two other young nobles to visit the Viceroy in Calcutta, one of the dowager-queens, the most influential in the palace, said to the young prince when he came to wish her farewell: "Your ancestors were content to remain on this side of the Cauveri (only nine miles distant from Mysore); why must you, then, cross the sea?" The idea was hateful to them, simply because it was so new. In the society of such women, all manipulated by priests, detesting learning and hating progress, what pleasure could the young nobles, already half emancipated by education, enjoy? Nor do the male seniors give them more encouragement. These men, educated from their youth up in the corrupt practices of a corrupt court, cannot realise the change passing before their eyes. They did not believe, many of them do not now believe, in its permanency. Education is for them simply a phrase. They had been trained to intrigue, and in the science of intrigue they still believe. What sympathy could exist between them and the new generation? Obviously none. "Home," then, to the young students of the Maharaja's school, signified an alternation of the warnings of bigoted women or the regrets of worn-out men. There was no comfort, no cordial welcome, no sports and pastimes, no merry meetings, such as we are accustomed to associate with the name in England. Can we wonder, then, that when asked how they would prefer to enjoy their holiday, the little king and his companions

voted for the cheerful air and competition of the schoolroom, with a good game of cricket to follow?

But cricket constitutes by no means the only manly sport enjoyed by the boys. Twice a-week there is riding school, conducted by a sergeant of the Madras Cavalry, according to the latest rules of the service. In this join several of the boys of the first three classes, including the little Maharaja. For those not so forward there is morning exercise four times a-week. The progress in equitation has been remarkable. Some of the boys would hold their own, on any horses, in any field. The little king himself is a very bold rider, and is remarkably fond of the exercise. He possesses also a pony-carriage, which he occasionally drives. When riding, he and the other boys use the English dress—a short coat, breeches, and boots,—the only deviation being the turban in lieu of the hat; and it may safely be remarked, that in boldness, in quickness of hand, and in docility of temper, they could scarcely be surpassed.

But what, it may be asked, is the inner life of the Maharaja within the precincts of the palace? Is there not some chance that the superstructure, raised in the schoolroom and on the playground, may be undermined by the influences still smouldering within? Yes, there is just that chance, but no more. The probabilities certainly are against it. It would appear that, until the month of August 1872, the little king lived with his mother, his sister, and two elder brothers, in a small house within the fort. It must be remembered that he was not born in the purple. He was an adopted child, his father being a relation of the chief queen of the late sovereign. It is customary, in all cases of adoption, to adopt the



youngest son of a family, it being considered that the youngest mind is the most impressionable, and will most readily adopt new ideas. When, however, the late Raja died, it was considered that it would be absurd to remove a child of the tender years of the present Maharaja from the care of his mother, and accordingly, it was resolved to leave him in her charge. The mother, we have already had occasion to remark, was an excellent woman in her way, but she was not less bigoted than the other ladies of quality in the palace. It is due, however, to her memory to state, that whatever opposition she may have shown in the outset to the measures of reform and education initiated by the Guardian, she ceased all opposition, and gave to the plans of the Government her cordial support, the moment she recognised the utility of their general scope. Still she was very much subject to the influence of the priests. She was beloved by her children; and there can be no doubt that, had she lived, she would have used all her influence and all her authority to check the budding of free thought, such as education almost always produces in the Hindu mind. She died, however, in August 1872. On her death it was determined to assign to the Maharaja a suite of apartments in the palace, under the immediate tutelage of the chief dowager-queen, a much respected lady of seventy years. His domestics were carefully selected, and every effort was made to prevent the ingress of intrigues. Thus, then, stands the case. He rises daily at six o'clock. At seven o'clock his tutor comes and reads with him for from one to two hours. At half-past ten he is in his school, and remains there till half-past two, returning an hour later, and continuing there till half-past four. After that he attends, twice a-week, rid-

ing school; plays twice a-week at cricket; and the other days generally takes a drive. He could scarcely be "got at" by intrigues before seven o'clock in the evening. And when we consider that he has to take his evening meal, and to retire at the hour of nine, we may feel pretty confident that the chance of intrigue is, at his present age, infinitesimally small.

We have not yet alluded to one of the prominent means adopted to encourage the English-speaking power of the boys. This it has been endeavoured to bring about by the establishment of a debating club. Every Wednesday evening the principal educated native gentlemen of Mysore, the masters of the school, and the boys of the first class, meet in the schoolroom. The Guardian presides, and announces for discussion a subject previously selected by a committee of native gentlemen. The debate then begins, and lasts for two hours. There is always something worth listening to. Many ideas, novel to the European mind, are often broached. But when one considers that the men, speaking always fluently, often eloquently, are giving utterance to ideas not only spoken in a foreign language, but thought out in that language, it becomes impossible not to pay a due homage to the power of the Hindu intellect—to the subtlety, the refinement, the deep and acute thought, of which it is capable.

For two or three months in the year, when the heat of even the Mysore plateau becomes hard to bear, the Maharaja and ten or twelve of the most deserving boys migrate to Ootacamund, on the summit of the Nilghéri mountains. Here a house was rented, and has since, we believe, been bought for the Maharaja. The boys are accompanied by one of the masters and

the Guardian, and continue their lessons. It is difficult to overestimate the beneficial effects of these migrations. Here, at least, the boys are far from any contaminating influence. The fine air of the mountains strengthens their bodies, whilst unrestrained intercourse with the society of the place imparts a tone to their minds. They ride, they drive, they climb the high peaks around them. They gaze on the beauties of nature, and wonder how their ancestors could have been content to remain all their lives in Mysore. They are strikingly sensitive to the inspiring influences which breathe around them; and they show the effect of increased vivacity in their manner, a greater absence of shyness and reserve in their intercourse with Englishmen. Nor, when confined by the state of the weather to this English house, so different from their own homes, do their resources fail them. Reading is to all a great delight, and when tired of reading, draughts, backgammon, chess, and occasionally a rubber at whist, supply the vacuum. They are very quick at these games, and take great interest in them. It is a curious but significant fact, however, that, as a rule, they prefer games of pure skill, such as chess and draughts, to those which, like backgammon, contain in their composition an element of chance.

One word as to the masters. Such strides has education made in Southern India that it is even common to meet with Brahmins of the highest caste, who are yet absolutely without prejudices. They will not, it is true, sit at table with Europeans. Custom and the ignorance of the masses combine to render that impossible. But their minds have become free and unfettered. Though possibly forced, by occasional circumstances beyond

their control, to "bow the knee in the house of Rimmon," they do but conform to rules, the avowed disbelief in which would subject them to the loss of that which makes life mainly valuable to a Hindu, their social position. Their wives and their daughters are all priest-ridden. For their sakes, too, occasional conformity is essential; but their hearts are not in these outer observances. They long for the day when emancipation from the Brahminical yoke may be possible. They have the foresight to know that no individual revolt will effect that emancipation. This, they see, can only be brought about by a simultaneous movement of all the educated classes, now rapidly increasing, — a movement, too, in which the sovereigns of Southern India—men like the Rajas of Travancore and Vizanagram—may take the lead. For such a movement the country, they are aware, is not yet ripe. They are content to wait and hope, though not, indeed, in idleness. They still work silently. To eradicate the love of corruption from the minds of their countrymen, to discourage and put a stop to the curse of early marriages, to educate their women,—these are the three objects, each important enough for an article to itself, to which all their efforts are directed.

It has not been difficult, then, to obtain native gentlemen who had taken their B.A. degrees at the Madras University to act as masters in the school; native gentlemen quite free from Brahminical prejudices, although Brahmins; possessing thoughtful and unfettered intellects, yearning for the truth, searching diligently to find it, deeply interested in their task, and determined to spare no means to make it succeed. It does the casual observer good to watch the deep sympathy these men show with the boys, to notice the quickness with



which they mark the special capacity of each, and direct their efforts to strengthen what is weak and to develop what is strong. Eventually; certainly, it will be necessary to engage an English gentleman to perfect the education of the little king; but at present all that is requisite for the development of the intellect and the strengthening of the character is supplied in the gentlest, the wisest, the most effectual manner possible, by these well-educated native gentlemen. They join in the debates. For them too, and for the boys of the first class, a library has been formed in one of the rooms of the Summer Palace, and this is supplied with all the graver English periodicals.

Our remarks on the school would not be complete if we were to omit all mention of some of its leading characters,—the boys who, most assuredly, will hereafter be associated with the Maharaja in affairs of state. We shall mention only two, incontestably the leading boys in the school.

First in the list stands the hereditary commander-in-chief, or Dulwai, by name Dévaraj Urs. He too is an adopted son, the late representative of the title having died without issue. He ranks next to the Maharaja, and in the history of Mysore the name has always been famous. Its present representative entered the school at the time of its formation, in September 1869. He was then thirteen years old, having had but little education, able just to read but not to speak English, and totally ignorant of geography, arithmetic, and history. He had never crossed a horse, and never seen a cricket-bat. He now is, taking him all round, the first boy in the school. He is the best cricketer, one of the best riders, and contests the first place in the first class with the boy to whom

we shall next introduce our readers. He is the leading mind of the school, and upon all his comrades he impresses his character. In a word, he is a very superior boy, possessing good talents, great application, and a very determined will. Yet, with all these advantages, we doubt very much whether he will be able to steer clear through the shoals surrounding a youth of seventeen in a Mysore palace, unless help, taking the form of importunate help, be forced upon him from without. We mean that if within the next three or four years he take to himself a wife—if he allow himself to be overcome by the wailings of women and the threats of the priests—his acquirements will stand him in no stead at all. On the other hand, looking at the position of this boy in the country, at his talents, his influence, and his fair means, it is quite possible that he may earn the title of Regenerator of his country.

The mode by which this result may be brought about is simple in theory, but encompassed with difficulties in practice. At present all promises well, and it is probable that all will promise well till the moment arrive when the decisive step should be taken. Then will develop itself that passive resistance, of all resistances the most difficult to overcome, but in the exercise of which Mysoreans are well versed. That it may be overcome we believe; but it will require the exercise of tact, of sympathy, and of unshaken firmness.

The plan—and we refer to it particularly, because we regard its success or failure as foreshadowing and affecting the success or failure of the education of the little Maharaja—is simply this: in a few weeks the Dulwai will go up for his matriculation examination to the Madras University. It is probable he

will succeed. In that case he will be allowed two years hence to try for the first arts' examination. In this, too, success is nearly certain. He will then have attained the age of nineteen; he will have received a fair education; he will be a man in all his ways. Naturally he will be full of curiosity to see the countries of which he has read so much. What is there to prevent him making the voyage to Europe, travelling a little, and then settling down to read for two years at Oxford or Cambridge? What is there to prevent him, do we ask? Nothing, if he have but the spirit to dare; but everything if that spirit be wanting. Everything, even though he have that spirit, but allow it to be crushed by prejudice, by ignorance, by priestcraft, by custom, by the prayers and tears of women. And in Mysore such obstacles have hitherto been all but insurmountable. Yet, after all, we have faith in the future; and if such a scheme be really pressed by the Guardian, and supported by the Government, we believe it will yet be carried out.

The other boy to whom we have referred as the competitor of the Dulwai is the son of the Controller, Mr Runga Charlis. This little fellow is quite a wonder. Not yet eleven years old, and small for his age, he is first or second in all the subjects taken up by the first class; he is the leader of the smaller boys in their sports; and, stranger still, he has more than once taken a part, and a most creditable part, in the weekly debates. He possesses a very original mind. He studies little, but whatever be the subject discussed, he is never at a loss. He is sharp and quick-witted, thoroughly independent, thinks and acts for himself, and shows a capacity which gives promise of being satisfied with nothing short of the highest development.

We have now endeavoured to answer the question which we proposed to ourselves at the beginning of this article, viz.—how far England is redeeming the pledge made to Mysore. We have contented ourselves with placing before the public a simple account of the great experiment now being carried on in all its details, being assured that such details serve to give a more accurate idea of the nature of the task attempted, the difficulties attendant upon it, and the hopes of success entertained, than any general reflections on systems and policies, which are often open to differences of opinion. Of the importance of the experiment itself, little need be said. England's career of conquest and territorial acquisition in India is now fairly at an end,—a career which, though it abounds in brilliant examples of the greatness of our national character, is not altogether free from instances of rapacity and high-handedness, derogating from the glory of our achievements in that land. But the reign of peace has begun, and we have now before us the less brilliant and the less exciting, it is true, but the more glorious and arduous task of regenerating the country. England has now to appear on the stage in all the strength of her character for truthfulness, justice, and fairness of dealing, and in that strange combination of national pride and universal sympathy which so fits our nation for extended empire. We can hardly be said to have made a fair start in this humanising process. Our Government is as yet but a mass of undigested forms which have grown out of the needs of the moment, without any very definite ideas of the tendencies of our measures or the objects they may achieve. But it must be conceded that many attempts have been made, both by our Govern-



ment and by private philanthropy, to elevate the character and condition of the people whom Providence has placed in our charge. Of the many directions which these attempts have taken, there can be none so important and so certain of achieving the end as this one of invigorating the national life at its fountain-head. We cannot overestimate the beneficial effects of such experiments carried on at the several centres of our native states. They must inevitably convert those states from being sources of weakness into mainstays of our power. They will enable the future native sovereigns to assume their proper position as pioneers in the social advancement of the country. It will be difficult to predict the exact form which the future of the nation may assume, but we say this: "Infuse life and vigour into its character." It is sure to grow and develop into perfection, according to its native instinct and genius.

One word to those to whom has been assigned the task of initiating and directing these experiments. They will, at least, be free from all the small instincts of an official life which go so far to influence detrimentally the characters of the governors and the governed in India. They will have better opportunities of forming a correct estimate of the national character, the life and aspirations of the people. They will come in contact with the surviving elements of their greatness in its truest forms. They will see, perhaps, less of the purity, simplicity, and amiability of the native character amid the intrigues of a court

life,—though, even of these, individual instances will be far from wanting. But that which will touch them most, which will inspire them with esteem and respect for the people of India, is the career and character of the few rising individuals who, formed by our English education, by the high ideal of our literature and history, are striving for their national greatness. These men have the most trying ordeal to pass through. But the greatness and difficulty of the task would seem to make them rise with the occasion. As yet limited in their numbers, with overpowering social difficulties to overcome, these men strive unostentatiously in the interests of their country, stooping, with singular devotion and patriotism, where they may not hope to conquer, and neglecting no favourable opportunity to advance the national position. It is impossible not to feel respect for such men, nor to sympathise with their noble aspirations. Engaged in such important work, and in the company of such men, one may well forget the absence from home and friends, fulfilling duties calculated to store the mind with all that is great and noble.

One word more and we have done. We have endeavoured to give a sketch as to how the young sovereign of Mysore is being educated to fit him to rule over his country. In connection with this it may be asked: Is there any one who will enlighten the public as to how the country is being prepared to receive the young Maharaja's rule?

## FABLES IN SONG.

To choose the form of ancient fable for the utterance of modern nineteenth-century ideas is a bold step, and one which carries with it a certain defiance of criticism. In many ways the rules of this branch of art are at absolute variance with all our poetical tendencies. It is didactic; we are so far from being didactic that we are by no means sure of the advantage of moral teaching at all: it is instantaneous in its effects; we are long-winded and explanatory: it carries out its purpose by means of sharp and incisive narrative, while we prefer to linger and grope among the labyrinths of motive and the infinite shades of character. In almost every respect the age which delighted in the Apologue is a kind of antipodes of our own; therefore he is a bold man who confronts us with all the old machinery of fable,—the very Fox of *Æsop* himself—the Ass, more philosophical, but of the same race with him of old; and many a less renowned interlocutor, brought back upon us bodily from the distant shades where *La Fontaine* was the last to enter, and where even he could do little more than translate the ideas of the ancient hunchback into brilliant French. That Lord Lytton should have ventured upon this, and should have got through his difficult task with much poetical grace and charm of expression, and with a considerable measure of success in the fables themselves, is no small testimony at once to his courage and his power. Let us allow that a writer bearing such a name was almost bound by circumstances to a novel venture, and that

the paths are few in which he could set out upon his poetical career without a sense of a greater shadow over him—a magnificent rival, whose fame, already half his own, could scarcely fail to obliterate any ordinary work, and relegate any singer of the usual kind into that shadowy land which is peopled by the sons of great men. The author of these volumes has made a manful effort to break that spell, and we think he has succeeded. We have no faith, for our own part, in hereditary genius. So far as the world has gone in its career, the instances are very few in which (at least so far as literature is concerned) a great father has had a great son. No Shakespeare, no Scott even, has ever had a successor in his own family. When it happens to a race to come to one surpassing outburst of power and wealth, the climax is generally followed, as in all other processes of nature, by quiescence at least, if not by decay. Mr Galton, we believe, in his ingenious theory as to the transmission of genius, bases his arguments chiefly on the judicial faculty, which seems sometimes to run in a family, one great lawyer succeeding another in the same race; and here it is conceivable that the intense cultivation, in one special strain, of the mind of the father, may unconsciously convey a mental bias to that of the son, as no doubt the stores of professional learning—the very air which he must breathe all his life long—may be partially conveyed to him in some subtle way, as an inheritance is conveyed, or as personal peculiarities are transmitted from



one generation to another. But this is quite distinct from the genius which invents and produces, and which is, as often as not, quite independent of education and training. When there is transmission from one generation to another of this divine impulse, it is in most cases, we believe, from the mother's side, —and almost invariably from the lesser to the greater, not from the greater to the less. A modest painter, known in his little district, no farther, capable of putting some tremulous sweetness in his Madonna-faces, and of infinite enthusiasm for a growing art, may bring forth a Raphael; but the Raphael himself has no child; the race ends in him, capable of no higher exertion, scornful of a mediocre issue after that grand efflorescence of the higher life.

We say this by way of protest, though it is in absolute contradiction to our present subject, and we must now proceed to eat our words with the best grace we may. The present generation has the unusual fortune of possessing two worthy descendants of two illustrious fathers. Neither Lord Lytton nor Mr Thackeray reach the Shakespeare level, or even, in his broader aspect, the level of Scott; but they were both men of distinguished genius, of whom their country has just reason to be proud, and both have left worthy descendants behind them. In both cases, so far as we are yet aware, the descendants are of lower stature than their predecessors; but Bulwer's son and Thackeray's daughter have done what no other son or daughter of great men have done within our recollection—acquired for themselves a distinct and fine reputation, quite apart from the shadow of the greater name which necessarily hangs about both. Miss Thackeray makes this wonder still more remarkable in that she has adopted the same art in which

her father did so greatly excel, thus provoking a still closer comparison—were any comparison possible between her charming pictorial gift, with all its wealth of tender colour and effects of light and shadow, and the keen philosophical insight and laughing yet melancholy power with which her predecessor set forth before us the unseen workings of the universal heart. Lord Lytton—who will pardon us, we are sure, for the difficulty we feel in giving that name to any but its first possessor, he who made it the symbol of all that was brilliant in intellect and fine in purpose—had still a harder task before him; for it would be difficult to find a path in which, at some time or other, his father had not preceded him to pluck a momentary flower of fame, if no more. We can very readily sympathise with the impulse which induced him to wrap himself in the obscurity of an assumed name, and essay under the modest disguise of Owen Meredith his first flights in song—thus escaping, momentarily at least, from the tremendous disadvantages of a comparison which his name would have forced upon every reader. We do not require to enter here into any discussion of the poems by Owen Meredith. They had sufficient merit to attract much attention from the public, and to awaken great interest in that limited public to whom the disguise was no disguise; in short, to make for their author an independent place and name in contemporary literature. Graceful versification, and much power of expressing the somewhat conventional sentiment of youth, are common gifts, and scarcely can be considered by themselves as proof of any original power; and the choice of theme, and general style of these productions, betrayed an inspiration drawn rather from society than from

nature, and might have been no more than the overflowing of a well-cultivated and graceful intellect kept in a high state of stimulation by constant intercourse with all that was most lively, animated, and brilliant in the social world. These causes are enough to produce something that may almost look like genius, and have been the ground of very pretty reputations before now. Lord Lytton, however, has not been content to rest on this apex of social froth and accidental fame. In the present volumes he appears to us from an entirely different point of view. The ball-room romance has vanished from his pages along with the sentimentalities of youth. The brook that babbled on its pebbly way has become a clear-flowing stream, reflecting many contemporary influences and lesser lights, indeed, but yet crossed by full gleams of sunlight, and rejoicing in the open air and wholesome breezes of day. The poet has abandoned that facile strain of fashionable romance which is but a poetic form of gossip, and has gone boldly into nature, and those deeper impulses which are as natural and more creditable to humanity than its superficial and frivolous ones. If we cannot affirm that there is any new revelation of original power to be found in his pages, yet there are occasional touches which go straight to the heart, and many passages that delight the ear, and subdued effective pictures to charm the eye. Whether he has the qualities which make a fabulist, in the strict sense of the word, may be doubtful; but that he has many of those which constitute a poet, can no longer be doubted; and the reader, we believe, will in most cases be more satisfied with this, than if the pretty volumes before him disclosed a new *Æsop*, with all the keen perception and brilliant

breavity of the veritable hunchback himself.

There are various reasons why the Apologue proper should be less perennial in its power, less immortal and infinite, than other branches of literary creation. In the wider sense of the word, in which all fiction is fable, its range is as lasting—nay, more so, than that of any other fashion of poetry. The narrative is the form of composition in which most of all humanity delights. It charms the humblest and the loftiest alike, and is as much to the purpose, and as suitable to its hearers, from the lips of an old crone over the fire in a mud-hut, as from those of the sovereign poets to whom kings and princes are glad to listen. The tale goes everywhere, farther even than the song—though primitive art conjoined the two, and made the poet a bard or minstrel, as he still continues to be whenever passion overleaps the dull level of prose, and bursts into a rhythm of utterance which is half music. The Apologuist, however, has a less extended ground to go upon. Tragic passion, or even strong emotion in its lighter shades, do not lend themselves easily to his sharp and distinct effects, his rapid conclusions, and the instantaneous character of his art. Those complications of purpose and sentiment which lend power to the drama, and interest to the fiction, are death to the fable. The heart and its workings are almost excluded from its sphere; and those intellectual qualities in us which are its chief subjects, are those which we share in common with most of the inferior creatures, and are consequently rigid in their outlines and capable of little expansion. Those interests which centre in self, which sharpen the perceptions in respect to external danger, and make us



keen to observe everything that can affect us with personal pleasure or inconvenience—those manifestations of pride, vanity, self-confidence, which bird and beast partake, or seem to partake, with men, form the ground upon which the fabulist is most at home. The sudden dilemmas in which he delights to place the actors in his brief drama, are almost entirely of a practical character, as indeed any moral capable of such sharp, keen, brief, and unhesitating identification must be. It follows from this that his art is lacking in that power of development which belongs to the larger sphere of story. We have nothing to add to those trenchant little narratives so full of suggestiveness, so rapid in action. The humorous self-consolation of the fox who found the grapes sour which were out of his reach (although in itself one of the highest examples of the fable, and containing the germs of a more subtle art)—the folly of the dog who snapped at the shadow of his bone, and thus lost both shadow and substance—or the invincible dull force beyond all argument, of that king of beasts who has made “the lion’s share” into a proverb,—are too perfect for anything but simple repetition. We cannot improve upon them, nor develop them; for those sides of the mind against which their wonderful satire is directed, are exactly as they were when *Æsop* wrote, and any addition to his rapid tale must be a disadvantage to it. The higher poetry is subject to no such limitations. We can go on for indefinite centuries ringing the changes upon such a story, for instance, as that of *Alcestis*, so full at once of passion and complication, shaping it according to our fashion, which is not the fashion of *Euripides*, expanding it or diluting it as the case may be,

throwing an altered modern soul into it, with vast enlargement of the canvas, and many a doubt and question which did not occur to the Greek, without detracting in the smallest degree from the old poem, or harming its integrity, or insulting it by vain repetition. But the fable is rigid; its story once told is told for ever. Notwithstanding our immense progress in morals, there is next to nothing in this didactic art, specially devoted to morals, which we can add to *Æsop*. Vanity still pictures itself under the shape of the jackdaw with his peacock plumes; and vain self-confidence has no better representative than the puffed-up frog who burst himself in his efforts to equal the bull. All these pictures are perfect, and will not bear meddling; but the case is entirely different with poetry. Let us take, for instance, that same story of *Alcestis* to which we have just referred: the modern mind remoulds that tale, as we have lately seen in Mr Browning’s curious and interrupted version of it; for the reader of to-day is incapable of believing in a future of happiness for the wife who died for her husband, with that husband who was content to accept and permit her sacrifice. The mere situation sets our imagination to work, and that which the Greek passed over as having nothing to do with the story, would be to us by far the most important part of it. But all this fine and ticklish ground is beyond the fable. Its conclusions are everlasting. The foxes and the dogs, and the lions and the wolves, have not developed any new faculties, and those points of human nature which they can best illustrate are as unchanged as they are. Everything (we are ready to say) which could be done in this art has been done already. Even *La Fontaine*, with a mind specially qualified that way,

and a language which is the tongue of antithesis, and loves nothing so much as an epigram, was constrained to repeat the stories of his great predecessor; and who will venture in sober English, which has no such characteristic adaptation to the work, to repeat *La Fontaine*?

Lord Lytton, however, has not led us into any such difficulty. Though he begins by an encounter with the very Fox of *Æsop*, that traditionary animal which has been received on all hands as the supreme emblem of craft and courage and unscrupulous ready wit, Reynard himself, in his own proper person; yet he does not perplex himself and his critic by any attempt to confine himself within the old boundaries of *Æsop*'s art. He is not by any means so intent upon his moral as a fabulist ought to be; nay, he occasionally allows his meaning to be carried away altogether into a rambling delta of melodious verse. Such defects would be simply ruinous to the Apologue properly so called; but, on the other hand, if he sometimes fails in correctness of art he makes us more than amends by breathing into the ancient strain those modern charms of gentle philosophy, of tender feeling, and that discursive reflectiveness and self-communion which are the special intellectual features of this age. He weaves his story with a difference as poor Ophelia wore her rue. In the fable proper there is much good nature, but no sympathy. Even the poor little grasshopper, who has been singing all the summer, is pitied by nobody when the dark winter comes, for which the small prodigal has made no provision. A certain cynicism even is in the calm historical morality of the curt narrative, which is more concerned to point out our weaknesses than to suggest any cure for them. What it does best of all is to exhibit folly to

us—the folly of stupidity or the folly of cleverness, the one being quite as marked and telling as the other; and we read with a certain sheepishness, as of culprits found out, not only convinced but convicted, and feeling that the laugh in which we join is more or less a laugh against ourselves. Lord Lytton, however, gives another turn altogether to the familiar strain. Even his Fox is sympathetic and friendly, and makes no attempt to take him in, as *Æsop*'s fox would assuredly have done, had his manners not been mended; and we recognise in almost every page the reflective, considerate, tender regard of an age much more advanced in life, so to speak, than the youthful age which we call antiquity, and which, in full exuberance of its fresh existence, had not yet learned to care for the “sober colouring” congenial to the “eye which has kept watch o’er man’s mortality.” Altogether, the experiment thus made of conjoining old principles of art with the spirit and tendencies of the present moment is curious and interesting, and throws light on both sides of the question. The ampler tale, the gentler moral, the inclination to explain and trace the course of motive and impulse, instead of concentrating and condensing all previous processes into one act, betray the modern with curious completeness. The diffuse light in the later picture throws up in bold relief the distinct form of the earlier art, which has not an unnecessary line about it, nor a spark of feeling, nor a trace of thought, beyond the immediate requirements of its parable; whereas it is the very essence of fiction, as cultivated to-day, to linger, to muse, to reflect, to trace out into blue distance the vanishing lines of its landscape, and burden itself with a whole world of perspective. These



laws of general action were wholly unnecessary to primitive art.

We are not sure that Lord Lytton has not allowed himself a dangerous latitude in his choice of subjects. Some of those he has selected are scarcely, we fear, capable of this mode of treatment at all, and lose all the crispness and clearness of which, even in modern hands, the fable is still capable, by an over abstractness in the theme. For instance, it is hardly within the power of the imagination so to impersonate a "rain-pool" as to be able to take a lively interest in its musings and misadventures. The strain upon our fancy is too great. We might understand a Naiad, disgusted with the mud in which she finds herself plunged, and the newts and frogs who share her refuge; or we might perhaps, by a stretch of imagination, be able to take some interest in the one sparkling raindrop, doomed to downfall from the soft beech-leaf, upon which it made a mimic sun, into the stagnant water beneath; but the pool is really beyond our sympathies. On the other hand, such a discussion as that which occurs in the fable intitled "Who's in the Right?" where the officers who posted a battery, the gunners who fired the guns, the cannon themselves, the ball, the powder, and the match, all claim the honours of the victory, is too elaborate and protracted for the instantaneous effect which ought to be produced, though there is a good dramatic touch in the sudden failure of all these competing agents to accomplish anything at all, which is thus effectively dashed off—

"The gunner pointed the gun to the mark.

With an eager spark  
The ardent match, death's nimble adept,  
To the touch-hole leapt,  
And . . . went out in the dark.  
Not a groan, not a flame, from the great  
gun came,

Not a belch of smoke : unejected slept  
In his burthen'd gullet the sullen bullet :  
The captains were cursing, the gunners  
were grumbling,  
And, drop upon droplet, as down it came  
tumbling  
Merrily, mockingly, laughed the light  
Shower :—  
'Oh fools ! lo, I sprinkle a silvery twinkle  
Of beads from my bosom, and where is  
your power ?  
Black dust of death, art thou melted quite  
Into a harmless unsavoury sop ?  
What of your lightnings ? where is their  
light ?

Quencht in a quagmire, slain by a slop !  
Your valorous thunders, voices of might ?  
Struck dumb by a dancing drop !"

This is fine, brief, sudden, and of truly fabulous rapidity of action, though we cannot say as much for the lengthened controversy of which it is the climax.

Other fables we might point out in which the same largeness of design and reflective rather than practical treatment spoil the story for its present purpose, or rather show its unsuitableness for such a purpose; but it is more agreeable to turn to those in which the very want of adaptation in the subject lends a charming freshness, quaintness, and grace to the pretty, antique, loosely-fitting robes in which it has pleased the poet to clothe his tender modern conception. We cannot show this better than by directing the reader to the first fable in the book—called "The Thistle;" in which—instead of beast and bird shrewdly resembling humanity, such as the old fabulist loved, we are instructed and delighted by means of the wild and prickly plant, everywhere cast out and rejected, shorn to the quick by every scythe, and grubbed out of every field into which he may happen to drop. The self-communings of the "poor little vagabond thistle" are charming—his courage, his patience, and cheery power of making the best of a bad business, go to the reader's very heart, and will,

we predict, make many a gentle soul look kindly upon the vegetable intruder, hitherto tossed out with so little ceremony from field and garden. As a fable, the Thistle is perhaps not the best specimen of Lord Lytton's skill; but as poetry it is delightful, as fresh as a May morning, and full of all the freedom of nature. We do not know where we have read anything more fresh, dainty, playful, and sweet than the *mise en scène*.

"The green grass-blades quiver  
With joy at the dawn of day  
(For the most inquisitive ever  
Of the flowers of the field are they)  
Lisp'd it low to their lazy  
Neighbours that flat on the ground,  
Dandelion and daisy,  
Lay still in a slumber sound:  
But soon, as a ripple of shadow  
Runs over the whisperous wheat,  
The rumour ran over the meadow  
With its numberless fluttering feet:  
It was told by the water-cresses  
To the brooklet that, in and out  
Of his garrulous green recesses,  
For gossip was gadding about:  
And the brooklet, full of the matter,  
Spread it abroad with pride;  
But he stopp'd to gossip and chatter,  
And turn'd so often aside,  
That his news got there before him  
Ere his journey down was done;  
And young leaves in the vale laugh'd  
o'er him  
'We know it! THE SNOW IS GONE!'

What are the tree-tops saying, swaying  
This way all together?  
'The winter is past! the south wind at  
last  
Is come, and the sunny weather!'  
The trees! there is no mistaking them,  
For the trees they never mistake:  
And you may tell, by the way of the  
stem,  
What the way is, the wind doth take.  
So, if the tree-tops nod this way,  
It is the south wind that is come;  
And, if to the other side nod they,  
Go, clothe ye warm, or bide at home!  
The flowers all know what the tree-tops  
say;  
They are no more deaf than the trees  
are dumb.  
And they do not wait to hear it twice  
said  
If the news be good; but, discreet and  
gay,

The awaked buds dance from their downy  
bed,  
With pursed-up mouth, and with peep-  
ing head,  
By many a dim green winding way.

The violets meet, and disport themselves,  
Under the trees, by tens and twelves.  
The timorous cowslips, one by one,  
Trembling, chilly, atiptoe stand  
On little hillocks and knolls alone;  
Watchful pickets, that wave a hand  
For signal sure that the snow is gone,  
Then around them call their com-  
rades all

In a multitudinous, mirthful band;  
Till the field is so fill'd with grass and  
flowers

That wherever, with flashing footsteps,  
fall

The sweet, fleet, silvery April showers,  
They never can touch the earth, which  
is

Cover'd all over with crocuses,  
And the clustering gleam of the but-  
tercup,

And the blithe grass-blades that stand  
straight up

And make themselves small, to leave  
room for all

The nameless blossoms that nestle  
between

Their sheltering stems in the herbage  
green;

Sharp little soldiers, trusty and true,  
Side by side in good order due;

Arms straight down, and heads for-  
ward set,

And saucily-pointed bayonet,  
Up the hillocks, and down again,

The green grass marches into the  
plain,

If only a light wind over the land  
Whisper the welcome word of com-  
mand."

Could any picture be more dewy,  
flowery, green—more waving and  
sparkling, more tender and musical,  
than this ripple of verse which  
gives us a kind of childish delight  
in the mere sound, like the first  
delicious surprise of a spring day?  
Into the midst of this legitimate  
gladness there comes suddenly the  
one atom of piteous discomfort  
necessary to awaken us to interest,  
in the shape of a homeless wanderer.  
This wanderer is no less a per-  
sonage than Scotland's national  
and appropriate symbol—a plant



which has been seen in poetry before, in verse written with a firmer hand, and where the outcast figures as no outcast, but a prince in purple array—

“The rough bur-thistle spreading wide  
Among the bearded bear,  
I turned the weederclips aside,  
And spared the symbol dear.”

Very different, however, is the aspect in which the prickly and dangerous plant appears to Lord Lytton. He has no thought of the national importance and dignity of his poor *protégé*, whose troubles go to his heart. Here is how “the poor little vagabond” makes his first appearance, humble and much knocked about, yet with a heart for any fate.

“’Twas long after the grass and the  
flowers, one day,  
That there came straggling along the  
way  
A little traveller, somewhat late.  
Tired he was ; and down he sat  
In the ditch by the road where he tried  
to nestle  
Out of the dust and the noontide  
heat.  
Poor little vagabond wayside Thistle !  
In the ditch was his only safe retreat.  
Flung out of the field as soon as found  
there,  
And banish’d the garden, where should  
he stay ?  
Wherever he roam’d, still Fortune frown’d  
there,  
And, wherever he settled, spurned him  
away.

From place to place, had he wandered  
long  
The weary high road, parcht with  
thirst.  
Now here, in the ditch, for awhile among  
The brambles hidden, he crouched ; and  
first  
Wistfully eyed, on the other side,  
A fresh green meadow with flowerets  
pied ;  
And then, with a pang, as he peep’d and  
pried,  
‘Oh, to rest there !’ he thought, and  
‘sigh’d.’”

The wish is father to the thought :

after a while he makes up his mind to try the venture :—

“Then the little Thistle atiptoe stood,  
All in a tremble, sharp yet shy.  
The vagabond’s conscience was not good.  
He had been so often a trespasser sly,  
He had been so often caught by the law,  
He had been so often beaten before :  
He was still so small : if a spade he saw  
He muttered a Paternoster o’er,  
And coverd. So, cautiously thrusting  
out  
Here a timorous leaf, there a tiny sprout,  
And then dropping a seed, and so wait-  
ing anon  
For a chance lift got from the wind—  
still on !  
With a hope that the sun and the breeze  
might please  
To be helpful and kind—by degrees he  
freed  
And feels his way with a fluttering  
heart.”

The adventurer is successful at last. Tattered and torn, he is able to reach the paradise of the sunny field, and, with an outburst of delight at being done with the road and rid of the ditch, falls asleep after his exertions.

“At sunrise he woke : and he still  
was there,  
In the bright grass, breathing the  
balmy air.  
He stretch’d his limbs, and he shook off  
the dust,  
And he wash’d himself in the morn-  
ing dew ;  
And, opening his pedlar’s pack, out-  
thrust  
A spruce little pair of leaflets new ;  
And made for himself a fine white ruff,  
About his neck to wear ;  
And pruned and polish’d his prickles  
tough ;  
And put on a holiday air.”

The reader will perceive that this charming current of verse is very unlike *Æsop*. The wisdom is less, the warmth of kindly humanity is more ; and we feel—which is the truest applause—that we never shall be able to look at a straggling vegetable vagabond again without a remorseful inclination to spare him for the sake of this ideal Thistle, who had so much to put up with,

and bore his troubles so bravely.  
The lesson is much sweeter than  
any the old fabulist had to tell, if  
it is possibly less profound.

It is perhaps in poems of this class, where nature, soft and summery, holds the chief place, that Lord Lytton is most successful; but there are a few satirical sketches in the true *Æsopian* strain, though surrounded by an amplitude of detail to which previous fabulists have been strangers, in which some of the prevailing weaknesses of the day are very cleverly hit. Here, for instance, is the sad experience of a muscular Christian, a virtuous and laborious Ass, who is much vexed in his earnest mind by hearing some foolish outburst of rapture about the splendour of the sun conjoined with an unfeeling outcry against his own musical powers. "What senseless exaggeration," he cries, "in this praise of the sun!" and finding a handy wagtail close by, who nods his head in assent, the sufferer unburdens himself. The sun can do nothing but shine, he declares, without discrimination, leaving marble gods and goddesses in gloom and darkness, while he gilds the commonest insects.

"Is that worthy work (now own!)

For a star to whom it is given  
To saunter all day up and down,  
Staring about him, in heaven?  
Look at me, little bird! I am far  
From comparing my humble powers  
With those of that profligate star.  
But, to perfect them, all the twelve  
hours

I've a practical occupation.  
Without it, I care not a whit  
For brilliant imagination.  
And I value not genius or wit,  
If it lacks the elaboration,  
The earnest moral tone,  
And genuine consecration  
Of work—work, steadily done.  
'Tis with pride that I bear up and down  
Sacks of corn to the mill,  
And sacks of flour to the town.  
For, whilst useful to others, I still  
Feel that fairly and fully mine own

Is the honour on me conferr'd  
Of the right to be thus employ'd.  
'Tis a privilege, little bird,  
By the idle never enjoyed.

Then, is it not hard, I ask,  
When my voice I raise  
In vigorous lays of praise,  
To celebrate Virtue's task,  
And her days  
Well spent,—yon fools, who bask  
In the sun's mere casual rays,  
All stop their ears with a cry, and fly  
My discourse at the very first minute,  
Nay, almost before I begin it,  
As if the devil were in it?  
Why do they do that, why?"

This is as entirely apt and to the point as a fable ought to be, and the solemnity of the earnest-minded Ass puts us in mind at once of a great many people in the world—an extensive class which bulks largely enough and makes noise enough to secure attention on their own merits. The satire is sharp but it is not unkindly, and indeed when we contrast it with Lord Lytton's more serious reproof of another class equally well-known, though happily not so numerous, we feel that the poet has been kind to the earnest philosopher. In the fable called "*Ancients and Moderns*" he reads a still more telling lesson to those lovers of the antique and worshippers of Greek, who are beginning to make themselves so much heard in the *dilettante* world. He tells how in a Roman vineyard there was found one day a "statue, Greek and fine," no other than the famous Laocoon—and how after beholding from a corner the enthusiasm over this marble of the curious crowd, a serpent gazing and crouching "down in the wreck and rummage of the ground," resolved to do something still better, and, carrying out its ambitious idea, suddenly sprang upon a marble wrestler who stood by, and wound itself about his stony limbs, straining all its might to crush him, as the stone serpent crushed the writhing Laocoon,—but alas! with no success



whatever ; " not one massive muscle shrank."

" The mute mouth its marble smile compressed,  
Calm as before, 'twixt serious lips serene."

The moral is pointed in fine and vigorous verse.

" When the great gods, grown jealous of great men,  
Great vengeance take on human greatness ;  
when

One grandeur to another, grander still,  
Succumbs ; when the Divinity, whose will  
Goads man with agony, doth not disdain  
To beautify the expression of man's pain ;  
When he, who doth with equal power in-  
spire

The harmonious strings of the delightful lyre

And the fell serpent fangs of Tenedos,  
Is King Apollo ; then, with loss on loss,  
Albeit the waves of blind Oblivion  
Wash out wide empires as they wander on,  
Tho' slowly over temple, tower, and town,  
Grow green the grass of Lethe's drowsy  
down,

And the dull weed of dark Forgetfulness  
Round spotless statues its accursed caress  
Do creeping wind,—yet this the gods  
vouchsafe :

If from the deep men save one wandering  
waif

Of wrecks that once immortal shapes have  
borne,

Still of some grace divine not all forlorn  
Men's lives are left. One fragment, if no  
more,

Of those great forms great thoughts have  
filled of yore,

Suffices beauty to reveal her will,  
Marr'd, murder'd, buried, but triumphant  
still !

" Well-meaning, but unwise, contortion-  
ists

Of our well-meaning times, whose tragic  
twists

Try modern nerves, appease your emulous  
rage

On the limp substance of the living age,  
But touch not ye the antique marble.  
Chill

To your embrace, and unresponsive still,  
Its firm long-frozen grain will foil for ever  
The feeble fierceness of your fangs' endea-  
vour.

For, O ambitious snakes ! tho' snakes you  
be,

You are not snakes of Tenedos : nor we  
Laocoons ; nor the wrath you represent  
The wrath of an Apollo. Be content  
To writhe in elegiac ecstasies

Round subjects fitted to your strength and  
size.

Feed on fresh food. But seek no second  
feasts

From the old Sun-God's long-since-per-  
isht priests."

Lord Lytton would seem to hold a special brief against prigs : a point in which we feel ourselves in the most entire agreement with him. The solemn philosopher, wise in his own conceit, has, indeed, always been a favourite victim of the fabulist ; and as, perhaps, there never was a generation in which men put forth more splendid pretensions than this, so there are unbounded opportunities for the satirist to whip this pet failing, which is so tempting and so easily identified. As a companion picture to the Ass with his " consecration of work," and the Serpent with his simulated Greek, we have the Windmill, who claims to be the originator of the wind. This whimsical conception is very cleverly carried out ; and its delightful disdain of the flour it grinds, and assumed power over the element which moves its senseless sails, is sublime. Like the other philosopher whose self-revelation we have already quoted, this worthy addresses himself to a questioning bird, solemnly announcing his lofty and unsuspected powers. The Sparrow is pert and doubting, like many another questioner of the mind of greatness. He has not even that respect for the wind itself which he ought to have, notwithstanding his doleful experience of its power, as shown in the destruction of his nest.

" I care not, I, if at home he'd stay,  
And not turn other folks out of their  
home,"

says that saucy *gamin* among birds, smarting under the assault of the last hurricane, and with a mind divided between wonder and contempt.

" Said the Windmill, ' Learn whence the  
Wind doth come !

The wind, whose sublime and beneficent nature

Thou fearest, foolish and feeble creature,  
Is the brave benefactor of earth and sky.  
But who is it giveth him motion?—I."

'A single stroke of my sturdy wing  
Startles him out of his slumbering;  
A second speeds him away through space;  
And, fearing a third, he hurries apace,  
Over earth and thro' heaven headlong  
hurled  
By the strength made mine for the good  
of the world.'"

The Sparrow, as is natural, is somewhat bewildered by this assumption, and asks for some proof of the wonder. All is still, he exclaims, and now is the moment to put this strength to proof; but the answer to this request is one which miracle-mongers in general, not less the sincere and deceived than the conscious deceiver, are very apt to give. "The moment is not come." The Seer replies:—

" 'When the inner voice I hear in me,  
Prompt obedience I render to it.

Thro' all my being, I know not how,  
But I *feel* the mystic impulse run,  
Which mingles my life (this much I  
know),  
With the life of the mighty world.

A moment comes when my limbs are  
stirr'd

By a signal they can alone divine.  
The voice is his, and the vision mine.  
Then all my being dilates, expands.  
With a shudder of joy I stretch my hands,  
And spread my wings. And my calm is  
gone.

A passion, a frenzy, a rapture rare,  
Fills me with force for the work to be  
done.

With the strength of a giant I beat the  
air;

And forthwith ever I hear the wind  
That whistles, and shouts, and leaps  
behind,

Striving to mount on my mighty wings,  
And drag me down. But fresh effort  
brings

Fresh strength; till I feel, in the final  
rest

By that effort bequeathed to my blissful  
breast,

The placid and gracious certitude

That I have fulfill'd my destin'd part  
In the work of the wondrous world; sub-  
dued

My noble foe with a valorous heart;  
And, in unison with the whole creation,  
May again subside into contemplation.'"

It is not, however, only the philosopher who is subject to the remark and ridicule of our fabulist. Like his ancient prototype he has as true an eye for the folly of stupidity as for the folly of wisdom, and notes how pride and self-estimation find refuge in the meanest corners of the earth. It is perhaps too much the habit of ordinary Art to run a-muck against one class, whichever that may be; whether the noble and great who can be assailed at so many points, or the rude and miserable, whose defects are also broad enough to catch any passing eye. But true Fable spares no class, and Lord Lytton is impartial, as his craft demands. He is full of tender sympathy for the cheery little thistle of the field, working his way undismayed through labour and danger; but comes down like a tempest upon the miserable nettle of the dung-hill, which owes its foul existence to the shower of soapsuds from a neighbouring window, yet arrogantly thanks Jove, the god of fable, for the admirable organisation of a world specially created for the happiness of nettles. One can divine the blatant demagogue in this bitter weed, who, when crushed by a sudden storm, abjures Jove altogether, and dies blaspheming that blind chance which rules the universe without plan or purpose, or care for nettles. That every man is first in his own eyes, the object of universal creation, the centre of the earth to his fond apprehension—is the lesson the poet reads us. The ass holds up his enforced journey from mill to town, from town to mill, as a grand voluntary offering of duty; the



windmill gives itself credit for setting the elements in motion; the very nettle, hated of all things, conceives itself the central point of creation. The ancient fabulist would but laugh at the universal folly; the modern has a certain moisture in his eyes. He is not all amused like Æsop, but partly indignant, partly sorrowful, because always sympathetic. Nothing could more clearly show the difference between the old and the new.

If, however, Lord Lytton is hard upon presumptuous Philosophy, he is very reverent of Genius, concerning which he propounds certain theories which are somewhat strange at the first glance. In the curious little poem called "A Legend," and in which we at first hoped to find a transcript of one of those droll conjunctions of wild imagination and matter-of-fact detail which are current among Italian peasants, and embody various saintly adventures not known to the Bollandist fathers, we find a place assigned to Genius which is novel to us, and not quite agreeable to contemplate, though highly respectful in intention. St. Peter, going off apparently on a holiday, intrusts to St. Thomas the gate of heaven; but in order to give that doubting personage some certainty as to the persons to be admitted there during the absence of the real gate-keeper, takes his brother saint upon a little expedition into the world to point out to him who are about to die. Among the doomed, the greater portion are already in charge of "pert little sentinel imps, clad in the colours of hell," with whom the saints have nothing to do. But there are three who specially attract their attendance—one of them being the correct type of Christian sufferer to be met with in all such legends, and for whom every heavenly felicity

waits as natural compensation for what he has suffered on earth. The second is a man of power and success, of whom Peter says derisively that he may be safely left to take care of himself. The third is seen standing alone on the brow of a hill with a face so solemn, sweet, and saintly, that Thomas takes his admission for granted, and is deeply bewildered by the hesitation of the heavenly porter. "Must I not open the gate to him?" he cries.

"'No.'—'What, refuse him admittance?'  
'No.'—'In the name, then, of patience,  
What must I do, brother Saint?'"

cries Thomas at his wit's end; upon which the better-instructed saint gives him the following curious exposition of the characteristics of Genius:—

"Sighingly Peter replied,  
'Brother, the man will not come.'  
'Ah,' with a gesture of joy  
Thomas exclaim'd, 'he will live?'"

"'Brother, to-night he will die.  
Die, when yon sun shall have set,  
Die, and the life he hath lived,  
Beauteous and bright as the sun,  
Shall, with the sun, pass away.  
All hath that man in himself:  
All, and he knows what he hath:  
Knows it, and asks for no more.  
He is himself his reward.'

"'Nay, then, what is he, my Brother?  
Name me that forehead, those eyes!'"

"Then did the holy Apostle  
Stretch, with a gesture fraternal,  
Forth to the man on the mountain  
Solemnly his right hand:  
Waving a mute benediction  
Whilst, in the ear of the Saint  
Who to him listen'd in wonder,  
Softly he whisper'd these words:  
Words which all Nature receiving  
Echo'd with answering thrills:

"'That which hath all in itself,  
All without any condition,  
All without any restriction,  
What can it want or demand?  
Having within it, and feeling,  
Comprehending, enjoying  
All things, nothing is left it,  
Nothing, to ask or to get.

“ ‘Three men are called out of life.  
One shall be welcom’d above,  
One be lamented below.  
Pure was the life of the first,  
Potent the life of the second.  
Each was an effort rewarded :  
One its reward hath in Heaven,  
One its reward upon Earth.

“ ‘Not so the life of the third.  
There is no effort in this,  
Therefore for this no reward.

“ ‘Man, it was, named the creation.  
What was the name of it, think you,  
Ere man himself had a name ?  
Here is the Thought that created  
Finding itself in creation,  
Feeling and knowing itself,  
And in that knowledge rejoicing.  
GENIUS men call it on earth.’ ”

This is strange doctrine, and we do not feel disposed to agree with the poet in this isolation, however sublime, of the possessor of that high inspiration which, we believe, the higher it is, is the more generally combined with all that is most simple, genial, and modest in nature. This self-absorbed, self-sufficing being is much more likely to be found among the intensely clever men who are conscious to the fingertips of their own remarkableness, than in the finer nature which is much more liable to feel surprise that all men are not as gifted as itself, than at the fact that itself is so gifted. This is a question, however, on which there is abundant room for difference of opinion, and upon which, probably, no two people were ever found quite to agree ; and this way of setting forth the grander theory of poetic exaltation is entirely novel if somewhat uncomfortable for the possessors of that divine quality. If Genius is to be its own reward, it is unfortunate that it should be so little utilised here by its possessors in the way of making earth bearable—a practical philosophy which but few poets have put into use. Lord Lytton

repeats with a difference this elevated view of the position of genius in the somewhat lengthened and over-serious episode of the “Eagle and his Companions,” an imaginative effort too heavy for the light machinery of the fable. Here the eagle, the impersonation of Genius, is set before us as on the whole feeling himself somewhat left out in the cold on the mountain-top of his elevation and isolation, and sighing for a companion, who comes to him, to his intense surprise and ours, in the shape of an ambitious mole who has worked his way to the top of the hill with the sublime ambition of bettering himself and raising himself as high

“As him the world so high doth praise  
For being born above the world.”

The Mole expounds its meaning with delightful piquancy and solid power of reason, while his Majesty the Eagle listens with majestic wonder, yet toleration.

“ ‘But what of that ? the goal’s attained,  
And I, the sturdy child of toil,  
What birth denied by toil have gain’d,  
Tho’ born a bondsman to the soil.

‘For, to be great, the great condition  
Is, I opine, a great position.  
And great as thine is now mine own,  
To those on whom we both look down.

‘So be it mine (thine equal now),  
With thee to see what eagles see,  
With thee to know what eagles know,  
What eagles feel to feel with thee.’ ”

The Eagle receives this speech, in which the mixture of energy and ambition with a stolid incapacity to comprehend the invincible differences of nature—which is characteristic of many vulgar aspirants to fame—is so whimsically set forth, with a surprised seriousness which has no sense of humour to relieve it, but which much heightens to the reader the humour of the situation.



"Long while the eagle answer'd not.  
 Long while  
 His grave regard in mute perusal stray'd  
 O'er those small weary limbs ; whose pal-  
 pitation,  
 The lingering trouble of their recent toil,  
 And all their natural weakness still  
 betray'd  
 With gasp and pant. A melancholy  
 smile  
 Grew as he gaz'd, and in his deep eyes  
 stay'd.  
 Was it compassion ? was it admiration ?  
 Or aught between the two ? At last, he said,  
 'So be it. I recognise thine aspiration ;  
 Enjoy the life for which thou wast not  
 made.  
 Thou art not of my kind. But, being here,  
 Receive ungrudged the guerdon of thy  
 thrift.  
 I give thee welcome with no stinted cheer.  
 What nature hath denied thee as a gift,  
 Seize, if thou can'st, as toil's due recom-  
 pense.' "

Whereupon the bird of Jove dis-  
 courses the Mole with admirable  
 gravity and a magnificent senten-  
 tiousness through four or five pages  
 of fine verse, displaying an absence  
 of all perception of fun on the  
 Eagle's part, which we hope Lord  
 Lytton does not mean us to take  
 seriously as an intimation that  
 humour is not a part of the develop-  
 ment of genius. The Eagle, not  
 very clear in perception, though  
 boundless in extent of vision, has,  
 after this, another disappointed  
 hope in the form of a butterfly,  
 which is blown up to him by the  
 wind, and in which delicate aspir-  
 ant he hopes at last to find his  
 wished-for companion. When, how-  
 ever, this flimsy creature is whirled  
 away again by the same wind that  
 brought him, our genius wraps him-  
 self in his greatness for consolation.  
 "Feeble wings, blind eyes," he  
 says—

" 'Pedant and sentimentalist, have done  
 Their best to share the Poet's ecstasies,  
 And, at their best, they both have failed.  
 The one  
 Snores on the height. O'erwhelm'd the  
 other lies.  
 What may he trust ?'

## MORAL.

His strength to be alone.'

This is an uncomfortable moral ;  
 poets, so far as we are aware, have  
 shown themselves generally very  
 gregarious animals indeed, quite dis-  
 inclined to try in real life that experi-  
 ment of loneliness, however they  
 may dwell upon it in rhyme ; and  
 we object a little to the heavy  
 grandeur of Lord Lytton's supreme  
 type of genius. It is more conven-  
 tional than such a picture ought to  
 be, coming from his hand.

It would not be fair to Lord  
 Lytton to pass over among so many  
 brightly touched and charming pic-  
 tures the few which he has put  
 in in darker colours, with a capa-  
 city for strong effect, and a sugges-  
 tion of power restrained, which im-  
 press the reader more deeply if not  
 so pleasantly as the lighter sketches.  
 One of these is the lurid little episode  
 called, "Pain," in which Satan, walk-  
 ing about among the tortured in his  
 burning home, hears one sigh of  
 such exquisite suffering that it  
 affects even his accustomed ear, and  
 seeking out whence it came, finds a  
 playful imp dropping rose-leaves  
 upon the open wounds of a wretch  
 beside him—a combination of sport  
 and torture which makes the reader  
 shiver. We do not quite follow the  
 prince of evil in his jealousy of the  
 sufferer who emulates his own  
 superior wretchedness, but the ma-  
 lice of the laughing little devil with  
 his rose-petals is really powerful. So,  
 too, is the force of the merciless, inhu-  
 man, scientific craving which is put  
 before us in the other parable called  
 "Knowledge and Power," where a man  
 setting forth to find the North Pole  
 is taken possession of, and dragged on  
 to his death in the icy wilds by the  
 magnet he carries, "whose fine  
 fretful tyranny" and hungry im-  
 patience to reach the goal, contrast

with the feeble powers of the human creature who is its vassal and instrument; when he sinks at last, exclaiming; "I can no more," he is met by a howl of cruel indifference from his tyrant—

"Thou can'st no more? farewell,  
Presumptuous impostor!' pitiless  
The importunate voice cried; poisoning  
with this  
Supreme reproach its victim's dying hour."

A similar but feebler effort is to be found in the fable called "Questionable Consolation," in which a poor unformed butterfly, wingless and powerless, takes a gleam of satisfaction from the fact of his supreme wretchedness—the "grandeur of utter desolation," in which he feels himself superior to all the world, melancholy as the distinction is. "Misery," says the poet, and it is finely said—

"Misery at her worst  
Hath one poor grace of tragic interest  
Proud Pleasure vainly envies at his best."

It would be easy to go on commenting with much pleasure to ourselves upon the varieties of poetic conception in the book before us, but our limits are almost exhausted, and we have only space to instance two more of Lord Lytton's fables—which we have selected for their poetic beauty rather than for their force as fables—and which we have providently kept to the last. One of them is the charming little poem entitled (not a very promising name) "Conservation of Force," in which the poet traces out the lineage of art, with a suggestiveness which charms the reader, finding in one picture an inspiration which conveyed to many others the first impulse of genius. The succession is most delicately and finely traced; though what right this poem has to be called a fable, we are not at all clear upon.

"A musician once, in the twilight time,  
Musing sat by the instrument  
Whose keys knew how, with a kindred  
chime,  
To interpret to him what his musings  
meant.

Then a picture, the man had seen that day  
And, because of its colour or composition,  
Had, deep in the soul of him, borne away,  
Unmiss'd, from its place in the Exhibition,

Began to suffer a mystic change,  
And pass from the soul where its own lay  
pent

On the wings of a melody wild and  
strange;

Which, as 'twere in a dream, his fingers  
went

Wandering after, over the keys;  
Whose notes were thus scatter'd, and then  
again blent

Till the twilight was fill'd with the music  
of these.

But when, like a wind from a land un-  
known,

That comes and goes with a will of its  
own,

The strain died out, and left, as it died,  
The throbbing silence unsatisfied,

A friend of the player's who, listening,  
sat

In that twilight chamber beside him,  
cried

With a sigh, 'Continue!' 'Continue  
what?

I have not been playing,' the player re-  
plied,

'But only thinking—ah, thinking? nay,  
But rather dreaming all thought away

About a picture I saw to-day.'  
'Strange!' said the other; 'and whilst  
unto thee

I was listening, just ere thy music faded,  
A poem impress'd itself on me,

As clear as a picture freshly painted.  
Farewell, ere I lose it!' Then home-  
went he,

And wrote the poem to which that strain  
Had changed itself in the poet's brain.

This poem another painter read;  
And it haunted that other painter's head,  
Till of it another picture he made;  
Which, like the first, was exhibited.

When, after many a year was past,  
Those pictures twain were uphung at last  
Side by side on the self-same wall  
Of the same museum, they did not fall  
Into the arms of each other, the one  
Crying 'My father!' the other 'My son!'



Tho' in line direct was their filiation.  
 But, like two athletes, they struggled and  
   fought  
 Against each other without cessation.  
 And men, taking part in the contest,  
   brought  
 Daily, to deepen it, fresh contestation.  
 Critic and craftsman, with praise or blame,  
 Choosing their side in the battle, became,  
 These the passionate partisans  
 Of the style of the earlier master ; those  
 Of the style of the latter ; until two clans  
 Of disciples, two schools of art, arose,  
 Which, in turn, put forth for the world's  
   applause  
 Masterpieces of different kinds ;  
 The unlike effects of a single cause,  
 One force transmitted through many  
   minds.

For, though none of the critics of this  
   was aware,  
 And not even the craftsmen the secret  
   knew,  
 Yet all these pictures the offspring were  
 Of a single picture—the first of the two.”

The last we shall quote is the jewel of the collection—the beautiful, tender, and melancholy strain which Lord Lytton calls “The Blue Mountains; or the Far,” and which embodies one of those intimate and touching self-delusions which are far too distinctively human to be expounded by bird, or beast, or inanimate thing. Nothing but the heart of man can divine that charm of the unattained which takes colour, atmosphere, and loveliness from the longing eyes that gaze upon it from far off, but which dissipates as the far becomes near, and cannot support the touch of reality. The light that never was on sea or shore—the vision splendid which tinges everything far enough out of our reach and experience to remain divine, are here set forth under a new image. The visionary of Lord Lytton's poem is “a man of little note, who lived on little means,” but who had one great consolation in his life of obscurity.

“A man, he was, of humble birth and mind,

His life was lowly, small was his estate.  
 Yet was there ever a human life confined  
 In bounds so narrow by ungenerous fate,  
 But it had in it something far and strange?  
 This man, from youth to age, had lived  
   and grown  
 In a great longing for a far blue range  
 Of hills that hover'd o'er his native  
   town.  
 Ne'er had his footsteps climb'd those  
   mountains blue,  
 But half his life, and all his thoughts  
   dwelt there.  
 He was a man beyond himself. They drew  
 His being out of him, and made it fair.  
 For wheresoe'er his gaze around him rov'd,  
 There were those beautiful blue hills.  
 And he,  
 Who lived, not in himself, but them, so  
   loved  
 And so revered them, that they ceased  
   to be  
 To him mere hills, mere human feet may  
   wend.  
 Their azure summits, to his longing view,  
 Were features of a dear though distant  
   friend,  
 In kingly coronal and mantle blue.

“And ‘Oh,’ he mused, ‘full sure am I  
 Those mountains feel, in silent joy,  
 The love my gaze doth give them. They  
 Seek it, indeed, with signs all day ;  
 Down drawing o'er their shoulders fair,  
 This way and that, soft veils of air,  
 And colours, never twice the same,  
 Woven of wind, and dew, and flame,  
 And strange cloud-shadows, and slant  
   showers.’”

These mountains are his comfort through all the dreariness of life. They “wrap his soul in their robe of blue.” They do him good solely by being there. He lives in a perpetual dependence upon them for all his better life ; watching the dramas of light and shade that go on continually upon their heights, and the fogs and the mist, the sweeping showers of rain, the lightning-strokes and the thunder-claps which give emphatic utterance to them, when the softer language of colour and haze and dew has been exhausted. In short, he lives by their help, finding in them poetry and sweetness enough to keep his soul alive, and trying only, if that might

be, that once in his existence he might get among them to give them his tribute of gratitude. Fate at last gives the longing mountain-worshipper his wish. He falls, in a time of revolution, into disgrace with the special petty royalty of his native town, as men so visionary are apt to do, and is banished to a spot among his beloved mountains. With a joy which takes away all the bitterness of banishment, he sets out upon his journey towards the hills he loves, promising himself ere the cock-crow on the morning after his arrival, to salute, close at hand, his old friends.

“So, at dawn, he arose with the rising sun,

And forth, as blithe as a bird, went he.  
At first he was puzzled and pain'd, to find  
All round him a field which appear'd to be  
Just like the fields he had left behind :  
A little meadow of grass, hemm'd round  
With many a little hillock and mound,  
Which hinder'd his sight from ranging far.

‘But soon are these small hills climb'd,’  
he thought,

‘And behind them, doubtless, the blue ones are,  
Where, sportively hiding, they wished to be caught.’

“Then he mounted the hillocks that rose close by,

And thence, indeed, he beheld once more  
The old blue hills. But they were not nigh ;

They were far, far, far away, as before.

“‘Strange !’ he mused, ‘yet I travell’d all day,

Ay, and more than the half o’ the night,  
too, post !

And all my life I have heard folks say  
That the blue hills are but a day, at most,  
From my native town. Did they err, I wonder ?’

Then, he ask’d of a traveller passing by,  
‘Pray, sir, what is that country yonder ?  
There, where the hills are so blue and high.’

And, when the traveller had told him the name

Of the place where the blue hills now were seen,

Alas, poor man ! ’twas the very same

Where, till then, he had all his life long been :

The country about his native town—  
His birthplace—whence he had just been banish’d.

The blue hills *there* he had never known,  
And the blue hills *here*, which he loved,  
had vanish’d.

“ ‘And have I been living, then, all this while

In a blue land—really and truly blue ?’

The exile sigh’d with a sorrowful smile,  
‘And never dream’d of it ? Can it be true ?

Never dream’d of it ! All seem’d grey,  
Or dusty white, with a patch or two  
Of lean green grass, or raw red clay,  
To enliven the rest. But blue ? . . .  
blue ? . . . blue ?’ ”

This touching climax is exquisite in pathetic surprise, though the reader has foreseen all along how the man’s passion for these unresponsive heights must end. Yet we keep hoping with the pilgrim as he toils along, and feel the shock with him when he finds that it is no reality, but only a distance that he has loved ; no true thing, but a mere vision and longing made alive by fancy. Poor wanderer ! still banished from the blue spheres of happiness, and doomed to banishment, not by king or kaiser, but by nature, more severe than any government. As he stands stupefied in this sudden trance of wonder and disappointment, there comes to him from the clouds which float over that blue land which is his own grey town a soft song of explanation. The “low and level” disappear, the “aloof and the lofty” alone remain ; that which we possess dwindles into nothing, that which we long for keeps our souls alive. So runs the strain ; and the visionary accepts it as he is forced to do with a sense of loss far bitterer than that of banishment.

“All this in his much-loved mountain tongue,

The man’s heart, hearing it, understood,



And he thought of the old old days so young !  
 But he spake not : only let fall a flood  
 Of passionate notes of admiration,  
 Over his wan cheek silently sweeping.  
 As when in their sorrow and desolation  
 At the death of the summer the hills  
 are weeping.

" Then the folk about him who knew not  
 aught  
 Of that mountain language, shook the  
 head,  
 ' How he taketh his sentence to heart ! '  
 each thought.  
 And ' Courage ! the times must mend,'  
 they said."

We could not better show the difference between the old art which Lord Lytton has taken up, and the principles of other and newer art with which the thoughts of a man of this age are naturally toned, than by concluding our remarks upon his book with this charming and tender story, in which the most ethereal side of heart and mind take the place of those grosser qualities familiar to the old fabulist, and a shadowy background full of flitting mist and cloud, and visionary vapours, is substituted for the poetical black board, the emphatic chalk or paint with which the broad effects of old are thrown in suddenly. Æsop knew nothing about this soul's longing ; neither, we fear, did La Fontaine. They tell us better than Lord Lytton can how Reynard schemes and frames his tricks, and how the wolf picks his subtle quarrel with the lamb ; but when we rise into higher regions, the polite Frenchman and the caustic Greek are equally out of court ; they have nothing to say on such dreamy subjects. Those divine sighings which are beyond solace on earth, and which by very dint of dissatisfaction prove our higher being, are in reality the best and most distinctively human features of our nature. Those qualities which we possess in common with the lower creatures

have their own place and importance in life, and are much more easily identified and exhibited satirically or humorously ; but the others occupy an intermediate position of a totally different kind ; they lie between us and a region not lower but loftier than ourselves. No proof is possible of these longings, so evanescent yet so everlasting, which have haunted the hearts of men ever since human records began. What are those blue hills to us that we should sigh for them ? Why should the distance recede before us, and elude us, and remain for ever unattainable ? Or what does it matter to a reasonable being where the flying vapour which takes colour from his eyes alone should find its resting place, there or here ? These are questions to which it is impossible to give any answer. We are perfectly aware that the distant blue upon which we gaze with longing eyes is of all things the most intangible, is indeed a mere optical delusion, if you please, a trick of our imperfect vision, a nothing, meaning nothing ; and yet how true it is that the eye, which can never be satisfied with seeing, goes forth to it ; and the heart. " Oh for the wings of a dove," says the Psalmist—for why ? To attain that which we can never attain so long as the globe confines us ; to be where we may never be ; to reach the unknown, the unfathomable, the far away—this is the deepest essence of human sentiment ; it is something beyond thinking, beyond reason, and which one touch of fact dispels like the dream it is. But what is there in life so profound and so tender as this dream, so completely pervading the very atmosphere in which all gentler souls breathe and have their being ? Which of us needs to be told in words how the earth and sky darken, and how

loss and emptiness fill the world, in proportion as the flying distance fades, and the greyiness of certainty replaces that ethereal blue?

He who can embody this finest and most spiritual of human sentiments in verse so melodious and clear, and write the story for us with a pathetic simplicity befitting such a subject, has soared far beyond the region of fable. This is pure poetry, and poetry of the highest kind. It is indeed, under the form of the Apologue, a victory over Apologue, and all other arts that deal most chiefly with man's lower intellectual endowments and passions. Shrewd power of thought, and practical sagacity, and ferocious animal instinct, with all their attendant train of comic and ludicrous self-deceptions; the wiles of the weak, and the stupid strength of mere force, which is sometimes baffled by those wiles, and sometimes in brutal impassibility triumphs over them; the follies of self-confidence, the schemes of self-interest, the tricks which man plays before

high heaven,—everything, in short, that gives power to the lower delineations of external life, stand down upon a lower level, and are at once discountenanced and shorn of their importance by one glance of the ineffable, the unreal, if you will, the higher atmosphere in which only the poet dare lift his voice, and in which that dumb poet, the heart, finds its natural air and breath. We can give no higher praise to Lord Lytton than to say that this, the highest note which he has yet attempted, is at the same time the truest. It rings soft and sweet into the shadowy blue to which our longings go out, and our eyes turn, with desires which are never to be satisfied, yet which we would not give up for the best of earthly possessions. We thank him more for this song of the ethereal distance, than if he had naturalised the fox of *Æsop* a hundred times over, and built for him the beautifullest mansion—or shall we say, hollowed out the roomiest earth?—that ever was seen by mortal eyes.

#### POSTSCRIPT.—THE POLITICAL SURPRISE.

WHILE we are passing through the press, comes the sudden intelligence that Ministers decline to meet again the Parliament that was summoned in 1868, and have decided on trying their fortune in a new House of Commons. On this decision we congratulate the country, which will have now the opportunity of renewing or cancelling the vote of confidence which it recorded at the last general election. How the people will answer the appeal made to them we have very little doubt; but, whatever the result may be, it was and is altogether to be desired that an expression of the general sentiment should again be evoked. The man-

ner in which affairs have been conducted has given ground for apprehending that a feeling of disappointment and indignation pervades the three kingdoms; and the elections made, when accidental vacancies have occurred in the House of Commons, have strongly corroborated the opinion that such a feeling exists. The belief that the people's representatives no longer reflected truly the people's opinions and desires, at once paralysed the Government, furnished the Opposition with a keen and ready weapon of attack, and politically unsettled the whole community. The time and manner of the dissolution forbid us to infer



that considerations such as we have stated influenced the Cabinet in recommending it ; but whatever their motives, we do not object to the step except in this, that it ought to have been taken months ago, and so saved Parliament and the country from the confusion and delay in public and private business which must result from the sudden dismissal of a House of Commons on the eve of assembling for the " despatch of business."

Only last month, in an article headed "The New Year's Political Aspect," we set forth our conviction that the Ministry was being sorely tried, not only by external distrust, but by internal dissension. "Will Mr Bright," we wrote, "be able to keep them (the Dissenters) loyal to the Ministry under such circumstances, or may we expect to hear that they have once more turned and rebelled against it? However time may answer this question, it is next to certain, from the changes of men and the changes of purpose, that it has been a work of the greatest difficulty to keep the Ministerial machine at work at all ; and we shall not be astonished if disruptions show themselves openly before long." Well, the manifestation of the disruption has not tarried. The contentions are so hot that appearances even can no longer be preserved ; and, as often and often has been the case before, a popular verdict has been sought, not out of deference to popular interests or inclinations, but to terminate the divisions of the Cabinet, even though it should do so by calling the Opposition to power. The electors have been approached with a bad grace, but it is quite time that they should come upon the scene.

Besides the notice of the dissolution, we have Mr Gladstone's

address to the electors of Greenwich, a document in many ways remarkable. It is even more wordy and involved in expression than what we are accustomed to in addresses proceeding from that quarter. He had apparently no time to be brief or elaborate, otherwise this document would not so plainly have borne witness to cruel bruises recently inflicted, to rebellions of subordinates, to a present sense of failure. Irritability and whining constitute the Premier's pathos, and, so interpreted, his utterances are truly pathetic : he is cruelly disappointed ; of that there can be no doubt.

Mr Gladstone is silent as to the point on which the electors of Greenwich and of the whole nation might reasonably have been expected to desire information—namely, why a Government, with a majority of from sixty to seventy in the House of Commons, feels itself so weak and helpless, that it is constrained, as a last shift, to call a new Parliament. Well, we can guess well enough ; and perhaps it was hardly possible for him to tell out his whole distress and failure. That he has completely broken up the splendid majority returned to him in 1868, there is no denying ; and yet here he is in the midst of the wreck, with fragments floating about him still numerous enough and strong enough to be effective under an able leader—here he is crying *de profundis* to the people to give him another majority, because the large one which they formerly gave him has got beyond his control. It is like sending round the hat of a guilty pointsman after a fearful accident, with an intimation that any trifle which the maimed passengers may be pleased to subscribe he will get for himself. But perhaps in Mr Gladstone's case the impudence is only assumed to give a colour to

the real petition to the people to give the *coup-de-grace* and put him out of his misery!

We must, however, deal with the document as a veritable bid for prolonged office. Its financial promises, which are evidently the cream of the benefits offered, include repeal of the Income-tax, and we know not what other reliefs to the tax-payer, to be compensated by a largely increased produce of existing taxes, and a judicious imposition of other taxes not specified (perhaps a match-tax, and some others equally ingenious). All that we have to say about these reductions is, that, if they are practicable (as they very likely are), they can be carried out by other Ministers quite as effectually as by Mr Gladstone. And, as a good reason why other Ministers should be preferred, the people will remember the unredeemed promises of 1868 with regard to expenditure. "I do not deny," says the right honourable gentleman, "that we charged our predecessors with improvidence in the stewardship of the public funds." Certainly there is no use in denying it; but how the admission is to incline the people to further confidence in those who make it, one is at a loss to conceive! Of a variety of other subjects named by Mr Gladstone as likely to occupy the attention of the Legislature this year, it may likewise be said that they can be attended to without his aid as well as with it. His mention of the

miserable Black War is little more than a *peccavi*, and a promise that, if he should be only kept in place, he will get out of the contest with all speed—lay it to heart as a warning—and never, never, never, &c. We need hardly comment on this.

One little evidence that the address was thrown off without much premeditation, is the comical insinuation of a confederacy of the Opposition with his late allies the Romish priests. This, we are afraid, indicates both ill-temper and hasty writing. Would Mr Gladstone seriously ask the country to believe that the Conservatives meditate the introduction of a Gagging Bill?

For our own party, they do not need from us an exhortation to be of good cheer; but they may profit possibly by a reminder that they are now but buckling on their armour, not taking it off. The fight has yet to be fought; and, much as Mr Gladstone and his colleagues have done to further our ends, we have still a good deal to do for ourselves. Let us contest every seat. Let us spare no pains of organisation or of individual exertion. The enemy is enfeebled, broken, desperate. It rests with ourselves whether we will complete his discomfiture, and wrest the guidance of the State from his hands. The period is at an end wherein it was our duty to "work and wait." We must be up and doing now. And, God willing, if we work bravely, we shall not have to wait long.



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ALICE LORRAINE.

A TALE OF THE SOUTH DOWNS.

PART I.—CHAPTER I.

WESTWARD of that old town Steyning, and near Washington and Wiston, the lover of an English landscape may find much to dwell upon. The best way to enjoy it is to follow the path along the meadows, underneath the inland rampart of the Sussex hills. Here is pasture rich enough for the daintiest sheep to dream upon; tones of varied green in stripes (by order of the farmer), trees as for a portrait grouped, with the folding hills behind, and light and shadow making love in play to one another. Also, in the breaks of meadow and the footpath bendings, stiles where love is made in earnest, at the proper time of year, with the dark-browed hills imposing everlasting constancy.

Here no man, however lame he may be from the road of life, after sitting awhile and gazing, can deny himself to be refreshed and even comforted. Though he hold no commune with the heights so far

above him, neither with the trees that stand in quiet audience soothingly, nor even with the flowers still as bright as in his childhood, yet to himself he must say something—better said in silence. Into his mind, and heart, and soul, without any painful knowledge, or the noisy trouble of thinking, pure content with his native land and its claim on his love are entering. The power of the earth is round him with its lavish gifts of life,—bounty from the lap of beauty, and that cultivated glory which no other land has earned.

Instead of panting to rush abroad and be lost among jagged obstacles, rather let one stay within a very easy reach of home, and spare an hour to saunter gently down this meadow-path. Here in a broad bold gap of hedge, with bushes inclined to heal the breach, and mallow-leaves hiding the scar of chalk, here is a stile of no high pretence, and comfortable

to gaze from. For hath it not a preface of planks, constructed with deep anatomical knowledge, and delicate study of maiden decorum? And lo! in spite of the planks—as if to show what human nature is—in the body of the stile itself, towards the end of the third bar down, are two considerable nicks, where the short-legg'd children from the village have a sad habit of coming to think. Here, with their fingers in their mouths, they sit and think, and scrape their heels, and stare at one another, broadly taking estimate of life. Then with a push and scream, the scramble and the rush down hill begin, ending (as all troubles should) in a trackless waste of laughter.

However, it might be too much to say that the cleverest child beneath the hills, or even the man with the licence to sell tea, coffee, snuff, and tobacco, who now comes looking after them, finds any conscious pleasure, or feels quickening influence from the scene. To them it is but a spread of meadows under a long curve of hill, green and mixed with trees down here, brown and spotted with furze up there; to the children a play-ground; to their

father an acreage, inspected with no other view than glances at its rental.

So it is: and yet with even those who think no more of it, the place, if not the scenery, has its aftermath of influence. In later times, when sickness, absence, or the loss of sight debars them, men will feel a deep impression of a thing to long for. To be longed for with a yearning stronger than mere admiration, or any limner's taste can form. For he, whatever pleasure rises at the beauty of the scene, loses it by thinking of it; even as the joy of all things dies in the enjoying.

But to those who there were born (and never thought about it), in the days of age or ailment, or of better fortune even in a brighter climate, how at the sound of an ancient name, or glimpse of faint resemblance, or even on some turn of thought untraced and unaccountable, again the hills and valleys spread, to aged memory more true than ever to youthful eyesight; again the trees are rustling in the wind as they used to rustle; again the sheep climb up the brown turf in their snowy zigzag. A thousand winks of childhood widen into one clear dream of age.

## CHAPTER II.

"How came that old house up there?" is generally the first question put by a Londoner to his South-down friend leading him through the lowland path. "It must have a noble view; but what a position, and what an aspect!"

"The house has been there long enough to get used to it," is his host's reply; "and it is not built, as they are where you live, of the substance of a hat."

That large old-fashioned house, which looks as if it had been much larger, stands just beneath the crest

of a long-backed hill in a deep embrasure. Although it stands so high, and sees much less of the sun than the polestar, it is not quite so weather-beaten as a stranger would suppose. It has some little protection, and a definite outline for its grounds, because it was built on an old and extensive settlement of the chalk; a thing unheeded in early times, but now very popular and attractive, under the name of "landslip." Of these there are a good many still to be traced on the sides of the Sussex hills, caused (as the



learned say) by the shifting of the greensand, or silt, which generally underlies the more stable chalk. Few, however, of them are so strongly marked and bold as this one, which is known as "Coombe Lorraine." It is no mere depression or irregular subsidence, but a perpendicular fall, which shows as if a broad slice had been cut out from the chine to the base of the highland.

Here, in the time of William Rufus, Roland de Lorraine, having a grant from him, or from the Conqueror, and trusting the soil to slide no more, or ignorant that it had ever slidden, built himself a dwelling-place to keep a look-out on his property. This abode, no doubt, was fitted for warlike domesticity, being founded in the fine old times when every gentleman was bound to build himself a castle.

It may have been that a little jealousy of his friend, De Braose (who had taken a larger grant of land, although he was of newer race, and had killed fewer men than Sir Roland), led this enterprising founder to set up his tower so high. At any rate he settled his Penates so commandingly, that if Bramber Castle had been in sight, he might have looked down its chimneys, as freely as into his villein's sheep-cotes. Bramber Castle, however, happened to be round the corner.

This good knight's end, according to the tradition of the family, was not so thoroughly peaceful as a life of war should earn. One gentle autumnal evening, Sir Roland and his friend and neighbour, William de Braose, were riding home to a quiet supper, both in excellent temper and spirits, and pleasant contempt of the country. The harvest-moon was rising over breadths of corn in grant to them, and sheep and cattle tended by their villeins, once the owners. Each congratulated the

other upon tranquil seizin, and the goodwill of the neighbourhood; when suddenly their way was stopped by a score of heavy Englishmen.

These, in their clumsy manner, sued no favour, nor even justice; only to be trodden down with fairness and show of reason.

"Ye shall be trodden all alike," De Braose shouted fiercely, having learned a good deal of English from the place he lived in; "clods are made to be trodden down. Out of my road, or I draw my sword!"

The men turned from him to Sir Roland, who was known to be kind of heart.

"Ye do the wrong thing to meet me thus," he answered in his utmost English; "the thing, that is to say, I hearken, but not with this violence."

Speaking thus he spurred his horse, and the best of the men made way for him. But one of them had an arrow straining on the cord, with intent to shoot—as he said to the priest at the gallows—De Braose, and him only. As the two knights galloped off, he let his arrow, in the waning of the light, fly after them; and it was so strongly sped that it pierced back-harness, and passed through the reins of Roland de Lorraine. Thus he died; and his descendants like to tell the story.

It is not true, although maintained by descendants of De Braose, that he was the man who was shot, and the knight who ran away Sir Roland. The pious duties rendered by the five brave monks from Fécamp were for the soul of Sir Roland, as surely as the arrow was for the body of De Braose. But after eight hundred years almost, let the benefit go between them.

Whichever way this may have chanced, in an age of unsettled principles, sure it is that the good knight died either then or after-

wards. Also, that a man was hanged at a spot still shown in his behalf, and that he felt it such an outrage on his sense of justice, after missing his proper shot, that even now he is often seen, when the harvest-moon is lonely, straining a long bow at something, but most careful not to shoot.

These, however, are mere legends, wherewith we have nought to do. And it would have been better not to rouse them up from slumber, if it

could have been shown without them how the house was built up there. Also one may fairly fancy that a sweet and gallant knight may have found his own vague pleasure in a fine and ample view. Regarding which matter we are perhaps a little too hard on our ancestors; presuming that they never owned such eyes as ours for "scenery," because they knew the large impossibility of describing it.

### CHAPTER III.

Whether his fathers felt, or failed to see, the beauty beneath their eyes, the owner of this house and land, at the time we have to speak of, deserved and had the true respect of all who dwelled below him.

It is often said that no direct descendant, bred from sire to son, still exists, or at any rate can show that he has right to exist, from any knight, or even cook, known to have come with the Conqueror. The question is one of delicacy, and therefore of deep feeling. But it must be owned, in candour, upon almost every side, that there are people, here and there, able to show something. The present Sir Roland Lorraine could show as much in this behalf as any other man in England. Here was the name, and here the place; and here the more fugitive being man, still belonging to both of them.

Whether could be shown or not the strict red line of lineage, Sir Roland Lorraine was the very last man likely to assert it. He had his own opinions on that all-important subject, and his own little touches of feeling when the matter came into bearing. His pride was of so large a nature that he seldom could be proud. He had his pleasant vein of humour about almost everything,

wholly free from scoffing, and most sensitive of its limit. Also, although he laid no claim to any extensive learning or especially accurate scholarship, his reading had been various, and his knowledge of the classics had not been allowed to fade away into misty memory.

Inasmuch as he added to these resources the further recommendations of a fine appearance and gentle manners, good position and fair estates, it may be supposed that Sir Roland was in strong demand among his neighbours for all social purposes. He, however, through no petty feeling or small exclusiveness, but from his own taste and likings, kept himself more and more at home, and in quietude, as he grew older. So that ere he turned sixty years, the owner of Coombe Lorraine had ceased to appear at any county gatherings, or even at the hospitable meetings of the neighbourhood.

His dinner-party consisted only of himself and his daughter Alice. His wife had been dead for many years. His mother, Lady Valeria, was still alive and very active, but having numbered fourscore years, had attained the right of her own way. By right or wrong, she had always contrived to enjoy that



special easement; and even now, though she lived apart, little could be done without her in the household management.

Hilary, Sir Roland's only son, was now at the Temple, eating his way to the bar, or feeding for some other mischief; and Alice, the only daughter living, was the baronet's favourite companion, and his darling.

Now whether from purity of descent, or special mode of selection, or from living so long on a hill with northern consequences, or from some other cause to be extracted by philosophers from bestial analogies—anyhow, one thing is certain. These Lorraines were not, and had not for a long time been, at all like the rest of the world around them. It was not pride of race that made them unambitious, and well content, and difficult to get at. Neither was it any other ill affection to mankind. They liked a good man, when they saw him; and naturally so much the more as it became harder to find him. Also they were very kind to all the poor people around them, and kept well in with the Church, and did whatever else is comely. But long before Sir Roland's time, all Sussex knew, and was content to know, that, as a general rule, "those Lorraines went nowhere."

Neighbours who were conscious of what we must now begin to call "co-operative origin," felt that though themselves could claim justices of the peace, high sheriffs, and knights of the shire among their kin, yet they could not quite climb over that romantic bar of ages which is so deterrent perhaps because it is so shadowy. Neither did they greatly care to press their company upon people so different from themselves, and so unlikely to admire them. But if any one asked where lay the root of the difference which so long had marked the old family

on the hill, perhaps no one, least of all any of the Lorraines themselves, could have given the proper answer. Plenty of other folk there were who held aloof from public life. Simplicity, kindness, and chivalry might be found, by a man with an active horse, in other places also: even a feeling as nearly akin as our nature admits to contempt of money at that time went on somewhere. How, then, differed these Lorraines from other people of equal rank and like habits with them?

Men who differ from their fellows seem, by some law of nature, to resent and disclaim the difference. Those who are proud, and glory in their variance from the common type, seldom vary much from it. So that in the year of grace 1811, the mighty comet that scared the world, spreading its tail over good and bad, overhung no house less conscious of anything under its roof peculiar than the house of Coombe Lorraine.

With these Lorraines there had been a tradition (ripened, as traditions ripen, into a small religion), that a certain sequence of Christian names must be observed, whenever allowed by Providence, in the heritage. These names in right order were Roland, Hilary, and Roger; and the family had long believed, and so had all their tenants, that a certain sequence of character, and the events which depend upon character, might be expected to coincide with the succession of these names. The Rolands were always kindly proud, fond of home and of all their people, lovers of a quiet life, and rather deep than hot of heart. A Hilary, the next of race, was prone to the opposite extremes, though still of the same root-fibre. Sir Hilary was always showy, affable, and romantic, eager to do something great, pleased to give pleasure to everybody, and leaving his children

to count the cost. After him there ought to arise a Roger, the saviour of the race ; beginning to count pence in his cradle, and growing a yard in common-sense for every inch of his

stature, frowning at every idea that was not either of land or money, and weighing himself and his bride and most of his principles, by Troy-weight.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Upon a very important day, as it proved to be, in his little world, the 18th of June 1811, Sir Roland Lorraine had enjoyed his dinner with his daughter Alice. In those days men were not content to feed in the fashion of owls, or wild ducks, who have lain abed all day. In winter or summer, at Coombe Lorraine, the dinner-bell rang at half-past four, for people to dress ; and again at five, for all to be down in the drawing-room. And all were sure to be prompt enough ; for the air of the Southdown hills is hungry, and Nature knew what the demand would be, before she supplied her best mutton there.

When the worthy old butler was gone at last, and the long dark room lay silent, Alice ran up to her father's side, to wish him, over a sip of wine, the good old wish that sits so lightly on the lips of children.

"Darling papa, I wish you many happy, happy returns of the day, and good health to enjoy them."

Sir Roland was sixty years old that day ; and being of a cheerful, even, and pleasant, though shy temperament, he saw no reason why he should not have all the bliss invoked on him. The one great element in that happiness now was looking at him, undeniably present and determined to remain so.

His quick glance told that he felt all this ; but he was not wont to show what he felt ; and now he had no particular reason to feel more than usual. Nevertheless he did so feel, without knowing any reason,

and turned his eyes away from hers, while he tried to answer lightly.

This would not do for his daughter Alice. She was now in that blush of time, when everything is observed by maidens, but everything is not hinted at. At least it used to be so then, and still is so in good places. Therefore Alice thought a little, before she began to talk again. The only trouble, to her knowledge, which her father had to deal with, was the unstable and romantic character of young Hilary. This he never discussed with her, nor even alluded to it ; for that would have been a breach of the law in all duly-entailed conservatism, that the heir of the house, even though a fool, must have his folly kept sacred from the smiles of inferior members. Now Hilary was not at all a fool ; only a young man of large mind.

Knowing that her father had not any bad news of Hilary, from whom he had received a very affectionate letter that morning, Alice was sorely puzzled, but scarcely ventured to ask questions ; for in this savage island then, respect was shown and reverence felt by children towards their parents ; and she, although such a petted child, was full of these fine sentiments. Also now in her seventeenth year, she knew that she had outgrown the playful freedoms of the babyhood, but was not yet established in the dignity of a maiden, much less the glory of womanhood. So that her sunny smile was fading into the shadow of a sigh, when in-



stead of laying her pretty head on her father's shoulder, she brought the low chair and favourite cushion of the younger times, and thence looked up at him, hoping fondly once more to be folded back into the love of childhood.

Whatever Sir Roland's trouble was, it did not engross his thoughts so much as to make him neglect his favourite. He answered her wistful gaze with a smile, which she knew to be quite genuine; and then he patted her curly hair, in the old-fashioned way, and kissed her forehead.

"Lallie, you look so profoundly wise, I shall put you into caps after all, in spite of your sighs, and tears, and sobs. A head so mature in its wisdom must conform to the wisdom of the age."

"Papa, they are such hideous things! and you hate them as much as I do. And only the other day you said that even married people had no right to make such frights of themselves."

"Married people have a right to please one another only. A narrow view, perhaps, of justice; but—however, that is different. Alice, you never will attend when I try to teach you anything."

Sir Roland broke off lamely thus, because his child was attending, more than himself, to what he was talking of. Like other men, he was sometimes given to exceed his meaning; but with his daughter he was always very careful of his words, because she had lost her mother, and none could ever make up the difference.

"Papa!" cried Alice, with that appealing stress upon the paternity which only a pet child can throw, "you are not at all like yourself to-day."

"My dear, most people differ from themselves, with great advantage. But you will never think that of me.

Now let me know your opinion as to all this matter, darling."

Her father softened off his ending suddenly thus, because he saw the young girl's eyes begin to glisten, as if for tears, at his strange new way.

"What matter, papa? The caps? Oh no; the way you are now behaving. Very well then, are you quite sure you can bear to hear all you have done amiss?"

"No, my dear, I am not at all sure. But I will try to endure your most heartrending exaggerations."

"Then, dear papa, you shall have it all. Only tell me when to stop. In the first place, did you, or did you not, refuse to have Hilary home for your birthday, much as you knew that I wanted him? You confess that you did. And your only reason was something you said about Trinity term, equally incomprehensible. In the next place, when I wanted you to have a little change to-day, Uncle Struan for dinner, and Sir Remnant, and one or two others——"

"My dear, how could I eat all these? Think of your Uncle Struan's size."

"Papa, you are only trying now to provoke me, because you cannot answer. You know what I mean as well as I do, and perhaps a little better. What I mean is, one or two of the very oldest friends and relations to do what was nice, and help you to get on with your birthday. but you said, with unusual ferocity, 'Darling, I will have none but you!'"

"Upon my word, I believe I did! How wonderfully women—at least I mean how children—astonish one, by the way they touch the very tone of utterance, after one has forgotten it!"

"I don't know what you mean, papa. And your reflection seems to be meant for yourself, as everything

seems to be for at least a week, or I might say——”

“Come, Lallie, come now, have some moderation.”

“Well then, papa, for at least a fortnight. I will let you off with that, though I know it is much too little. And when you have owned to that, papa, what good reason can you give for behaving so to me—me—me, as good a child as ever there was?”

“Can ‘me, me, me,’ after living through such a fortnight of mortification—the real length of the period being less than four hours, I believe—can she listen to a little story without any excitement?”

“Oh papa, a story, a story! That will make up for everything. What a lovely pleasure! There is nothing I love half so much as listening to old stories. I seem to be living my old age over, before I come to any age. Papa, I will forgive you everything, if you tell me a story.”

“Alice, you are a little too bad. I know what a very good girl you are; but still you ought to try to think. When you were only two years old, you looked as if you were always thinking.”

“So I am now, papa; always thinking—how to please you, and do my best.”

Sir Roland was beaten by this, because he knew the perfect truth of it. Alice already thought too much about everything she could think of. Her father knew how bad it is, when the bright young time is clouded over with unseasonable cares; and often he had sore misgivings, lest he might be keeping his pet child too much alone. But she only laughed whenever he offered to find her new companions, and said that her cousins at the rectory were enough for her.

“If you please, papa,” she now broke in upon his thinking, “how

long will it be before you begin to tell me this beautiful story?”

“My own darling, I forgot; I was thinking of you, and not of any trumpery stories. But this is the very day of all days to sift our little mystery. You have often heard, of course, about our old astrologer.”

“Of course I have, papa—of course! And with all my heart I love him. Everything the shepherds tell me shows how thoroughly good he was.”

“Very well then, all my story is about him, and his deeds.”

“Oh papa, then do try, for once in your life, to be in a hurry. I do love everything about him; and I have heard so many things.”

“No doubt you have, my dear; but perhaps of a somewhat fabulous order. His mind, or his manners, or appearance, or at any rate something seems to have left a lasting impression upon the simple folk hereabout.”

“Better than a pot of money; an old woman told me the other day, it was better than a pot of money for anybody to dream of him.”

“It would do them more good, no doubt. But I have not had a pinch of snuff to-day. You have nearly broken me, Alice; but still you do allow me one pinch when I begin to tell you a good story.”

“Three, papa, you shall have three now, and you may take them all at once, because you never told such a story, as I feel sure it is certain to be, in all the whole course of your life before. Now come here, where the sun is setting, so that I may watch the way you are telling every word of it; and if I ask you any questions you must nod your head, but never presume to answer one of them, unless you are sure that it will go on without interrupting the story. Now, papa, no more delay.”



## CHAPTER V.—THE LEGEND OF THE ASTROLOGER.

Two hundred years before the day when Alice thus sat listening, an ancestor of hers had been renowned in Anatolia. The most accomplished and most learned prince in all lesser Asia was Agasicles Syennesis, descended from Mausolus (made immortal by his mausoleum), and from that celebrated king, Syennesis of Cilicia. There had been, after both these were dead, and much of their repute gone by, creditable and happy marriages in and out their descendants, at a little over, and a little under, twenty-two centuries ago; and the best result and issue of all these was now embodied in Prince Agasicles.

The prince was not a patron only, but also an eager student, of the more recondite arts and science then in cultivation. Especially he had given his mind to chemistry (including alchemy), mineralogy, and astrology. Devoting himself to these fine subjects, and many others, he seems to have neglected anthropology; so that in his fiftieth year he was but a lonesome bachelor. Troubled at this time of life with many expostulations—genuine on the part of his friends, and emphatic on that of his relatives—he held a long interview with the stars, and taking their advice exactly as they gave and meant it, married a wife the next afternoon, and (so far as he could make out) the right one. This turned out well. His wife went off, on the occasion of her first confinement, leaving him with a daughter, born A.D. 1590, and all women pronounced her beautiful.

The prince now spent his leisure time in thought and calculation. He had almost made his mind up that he was sure to have a son; and here was his wife gone; and how could he risk his life again so?

Upon the whole, he made up his mind, that matters might have been worse, although they ought to have been much better, and that he must thank the stars, and not be too hard upon any one; and so he fell to at his science again, and studied almost everything.

In that ancient corner of the world, old Caria, the fine original Leleges looked up to the prince, and loved him warmly, and were ready by night or day to serve him, or to rob him. They saw that now was the finest chance (while he was looking at the stars, with no wife to look out for him) for them to do their duty to their families by robbing him; and this they did with honest comfort, and a sense of going home in the proper way to go.

Prince Agasicles, growing older, felt these troubles more and more. As a general rule, a man growing older has a more extensive knowledge that he must be robbed of course; and yet he scarcely ever seems to reconcile himself with maturing wisdom to the process. And so it happened to this good prince; not that he cared so very much about little trifles that might attract the eye of taste and the hand of skill, but that he could not (even with the aid of all the stars) find anything too valuable to be stolen. Hence, as his daughter, Artemise, grew to the fulness of young beauty, he thought it wise to raise the most substantial barrier he could build betwixt her and the outer world.

There happened to be in that neighbourhood then an active supply of villains. Of this by no means singular fact the prince might well assure himself, by casting his eyes down from the stars to the narrow bosom of his mother

earth. But whether thus or otherwise forewarned of local mischief, the Carian prince took a very strong measure, and even a sacrilegious one. In or about the year of our reckoning, 1606, he walled off his daughter, and other goods, in a certain peninsula of his own, clearly displayed in our maps, and as clearly forbidden to be either trenched or walled by a Pythia skilled in trimeter tone, who seems to have been a lady of exceptionally clear conservatism.

The prince, as the sage of the neighbourhood, knew all about this prohibition, and that it was still in force, and must have acquired twentyfold power by the lapse of twenty centuries; and as the sea had retreated a little during that short period, it was evident that Jove had been consistent in the matter. "He never meant it for an island, else he would have made it one." Agasicles therefore felt some doubt about the piety of his proceeding, retaining as he did, in common with his neighbours, some respect for the classic gods. His respect, however, for the stars was deeper, and these told him that young Artemise was likely to be run away with by some bold adventurer. A peninsula was the very thing to suit his purpose, and none could be fairer or snugger than this of his own, the very site of ancient Cnidos, whereof Venus once was queen.

Undeterred by this local affection, or even the warnings of Delphi, the learned prince exerted himself, and by means of a tidy hedge of paliure and aspalathus made the five stades of isthmus proof against even thick-trouser'd gentlemen, *a fortiori* against the natives all undew'd with pantaloons. Neither might his fence be leaped by any of the roving horsemen—Turks, Cilicians, Pamphyliaus, Karamanians, or reavers from the chain of Taurus.

This being fixed to his satisfaction, with a couple of sentries at the gate, and one at either end, prompt with matchlocks, and above all, the young lady inside provided with many proverbs, Prince Agasicles set forth on a visit to an Armenian sage, reputed to be as wise as himself almost. With him he discussed Alhasen, Vitellio, and their own contemporary, Kepler, and spent so many hours aloft, that on his return to his native place he discovered his own little oversight. This was so very simple that it required at least a sage and great philosopher to commit it. The learned man appears to have forgotten that the sea is navigable. So it chanced that a gay young Englishman, cruising about in an armed speronera, among the Ægean islands, and now in the Carpathian sea, hunting after pirates, heard of this Eastern Cynosure, and her walled seclusion. This of course was enough for him. Landing under the promontory where the Cnidian Venus stood, he fell, and falling dragged another, into the wild maze of love.

Mazed they seemed of course, and nearly mad no doubt to other folk. To themselves, however, they were in a new world altogether, far above the level and the intellect of the common world. Artemise forgot her pride, her proverbs, and pretensions; she had lost her own way in the regions of a higher life; and nothing to her was the same as it had been but yesterday. Heart and soul, and height and depth, she trusted herself to the Englishman, and even left her jewels.

Therefore they two launched their bark upon the unknown waters; the damsel with her heart in tempest of the filial duties shattered, and the fatherland cast off, yet for the main part anchored



firmly on the gallant fluke of love ; the youth in a hurry to fight a giant, if it would elevate him to her.

Artemise, with all her rashness, fared much better than she deserved for leaving an adoring father the wrong side of the quickset hedge. The bold young mariner happened to be a certain Hilary Lorraine, heir of that old house or castle in the Southdown coombe. Possessed with the adventurous spirit of his uncles, the famous Shirley brothers, he had sailed with Raleigh, and made havock here and there, and seen almost as much of the world as was good for himself or it.

Enlarged by travel, he was enabled to suppress rude curiosity about the wishes of the absent prince ; and deferring to a better season the pleasure of his acquaintance, he made all sail with the daughter on board, as set forth already ; and those two were made into one, according to the rites of

the old Greek Church, in the classic shades of Ida. And to their dying day it never repented either of them—much.

When the prince returned, and found no daughter left to meet him, he failed for a short time to display that self-command upon which he had for years been wont to plume himself. But having improved his condition of mind by a generous bastinado of servants, peasants, and matchlock-men, he found himself reasonably remounting into the sphere of pure intellect. In a night or two an interesting conjunction of heavenly bodies happened, and eclipsed this nebulous world of women.

In a few years' time he began to get presents, eatable, drinkable, and good. Gradually thus he showed his wisdom, by foregoing petty wrath ; and when he was summoned to meet a star, militant to his grandson, he could not help ordering his horse.

#### CHAPTER VI.—THE LEGEND OF THE ASTROLOGER.

Although this prince knew so much more of the heaven above than the earth beneath, he did not quite expect to ride the whole of the way to England. At Smyrna he took ship, and after some difficulties and dangers, landed at Shoreham, full of joy to behold his four grandchildren, who proved to be five by the time he saw them. The Sussex roads were as bad as need be, and worse than could be anywhere else ; but the sturdy oxen set their necks to drag through all things, thick or thin ; and the prince stuck fast to his coach, as firmly as the coach stuck fast with him. Having never seen any roads before, he thought them a wonderful institution, and though misled by the light of nature to grumble

at some of his worst upsets, a little reflection led him softly back into contentment. A mind “irretrievably analytic” at once distinguished wisdom's element in the Sussex reasoners.

“Gin us made thase hyur radds gooder, volk 'ood be radin' down droo 'em avery dai, a'most ! The Lard in heaven never made radds as cud ever baide the work, if stranngers cud goo along, wi'out bin vorced to zit down, and mend 'un.”

When this was interpreted to his Highness, he was so struck with its clear sound sense, and logical sequence, that he fell back, and for the rest of his journey admired the grandeur of English character. This sentiment, so deeply founded, was

not likely to be impaired by further acquaintance with our great nation. For more than a twelvemonth Prince Agasicles made his home in England, and many of his quaint remarks abode on Sussex shepherds' tongues for generations afterwards, recommended as they were by the vantage of princely wisdom. For he picked up quite enough of the language to say odd things as a child does, and with a like simplicity. With this difference, however, that while the great hits of the little ones, by the proud mother chronicled, are the lucky outbursts of happy inexperience, the old man's sage words were the issue of unhappy experience.

Nevertheless he must have owned a genial nature still at work. For he loved to go down the village-lane, when the wind was cold on the highland, and there to wait at a cottage-door, till the children came to stare at him. And soon these children had courage to spy that, in spite of his outlandish dress, pockets were about him, and they whispered as much to one another, while their eyes were testing him. At other times when the wind was soft, and shadows of gentle clouds were shed in chase of one another, this great man who had seen the world, and knew all the stars hanging over it—his pleasure was to wander in and out of the ups and downs and nooks of quaintly-plaited hills, and feast his eyes upon their verdure. After that, when the westering light was spreading the upland ridge with gold, and the glades with grey solemnity, this man of declining years was well content to lean on a bank of turf, and watch the quiet ways of sheep. Often thus his mind was carried back to the land of childhood, soothed as in his nurse's arms by nature's peace around him. And if his dreams were interrupted by

the crisp fresh sound of browsing, and the ovine tricks as bright as any human exploits, he would turn and do his best to talk with the lonely shepherds.

These, in their simple way, amused him, with their homely saws, and strange content, and independence; and he no less delighted them by unaccustomed modes of speech, and turns of thought beyond their minds, and distant wisdom quite brought home. Thus, and by many other means, this ancient prince, of noble presence, and of flowing snow-white hair, and vesture undisgraced by tailors, left such trace upon these hills, that even his ghost was well believed to know all the sheep-tracks afterwards.

Pleased with England, and with English scenery and customs, as well as charmed with having five quite baby stars to ephemerise, this great astrologer settled to stay in our country as long as possible. He sent his trusty servant, Memel, in a merchant-ship from Shoreham to fetch his implements and papers, precious things of many kinds, and curiosities long in store. Memel brought all these quite safe, except one little thing or two, which he accounted trifles; but his master was greatly vexed about them.

The prince unpacked his goods most carefully in his own eight-sided room, allowing none but his daughter to help him, and not too sure about trusting her. Then forth he set for a real campaign among the stars of the Southdowns—and supper-call and breakfast-bell were no more than the bark of a dog to him. And thus he spent his nights, alas! forgetful of the different clime, under the cold stars, when by rights he should have been under the counterpane.

This grew worse and worse, until towards the middle of the month of



June, A.D. 1611, his mind was altogether much above its proper temperature. Great things were pending in the heavens, which might be quoted as pious excuse for a little human restlessness. The prince with his implements always ready, either in his lantern-chamber, or at his favourite spot of the hills, according to the weather, grew more and more impatient daily for the sun to be out of the way, and more and more intolerant every night of any cloudiness. Self-perplexed, downcast, and moody (except when for a few brief hours a brighter canopy changed his gloom into a nervous rapture), he wasted and waned away in body, as his mind grew brighter. After the hurried night, he dragged his faint way home in the morning, and his face of exhausted power struck awe into the household. No one dared to ask him what had happened, or why he looked so; and he like a true philosopher kept all explanations to himself. And then he started anew, and strode, with his Samian cloak around him, over the highest and darkest and most lonely hill, out of people's sight.

One place there was, which beyond all others suited his purposes and his mood. A well-known landmark now, and the scene of many a merry picnic, Chanctonbury Ring was then a lonely spot imbued with terror of a wandering ghost,—an ancient ghost with a long white beard, walking even in the afternoon, with its head bowed down in search of something—a vain search of centuries. This long-sought treasure has now been found; not

by the ghost, however, but by a lucky stroke of the ploughshare; and the spectral owner roves no more. He is supposed, with all the assumption required to make a certainty, to have been a tenant on Chancton Manor, under Earl Gurth, the brother of Harold, and being slain at Hastings, to have forgotten where his treasure lay.

The Ring, as of old, is a height of vantage for searching all the country round with a telescope on a breezy day. It is the salient point and foreland of a long ridge of naked hills, crowned with darker eminence by a circle of storm-huddled trees. But when the astrologer Agasicles made his principal night-haunt here, the Ring was not overhung with trees, but only outlined by them; and the rampart of the British camp (if such it were) was more distinct, and uninvaded by planters. So that here was the very place for a quiet sage to make his home, sweeping a long horizon and secure from interruption. To such a citadel of science, guarded by the fame of ghosts, even his daughter Artemise, or his trusty servant Memel, would scarcely dare to follow him; much less any of the peasants, who, from the lowland, seeing a distant light, crossed themselves; for that fine old custom flourished still among them. Therefore, here his tent was pitched, and here he spent the nights in gazing, and often the days in computation, not for himself but for his descendants; until his frame began to waste, and his great dark eyes grew pale with it.

#### CHAPTER VII.—THE LEGEND OF THE ASTROLOGER.

Artemise, and all around the prince, had been alarmed of late by many little symptoms. He always had been rashly given to take no

heed of his food or clothes; but now he went beyond all that, and would have no one take heed for him, or dare to speak of the matter much.

Hence, without listening to any nonsense, all the women were sure of one thing—the prince was wearing himself away.

The country people who knew him, and loved him with a little mystery, said that it was no wonder he should worry himself, for being so long away from home, in manners, and in places also. "Sure it must be a trial for him; out all night in the damp and fog; and he no sense of breeches!"

There was much of truth in this, no doubt, as well as much outside it. Yet none of them could enter into his peculiar state of mind. So that he often reproached himself for having been rude, but could not help it. Every one made allowance for him, as Englishmen do for a foreigner, as being of a somewhat lower order, in many ways, in creation. Yet with a mixture of mind about it, they admired him more and more.

The largeness of his nature still was very conspicuous in this,—he never brought his telescope to bear on his own planet. His heart was reaching so far forward into future ages, that he strove to follow downwards nine or ten entails of stars. To know what was to become of all that were to be descended from him; a highly interesting, but also a deeply exhausting question. This perpetual effort told very hard upon his constitution, for nothing less than fatal worry could have so impaired his native grace and lofty courtesy.

Yet before his sudden end, a softer and more genial star was culminated one evening. When one's time comes to be certain—whether by earthly senses, or by influence of heaven—of the buoyant balance turning, and the slender span out-spun, tender thinkings, and kind wishes, come to the good side of us. Through this power, the petty

troubles, and the crooked views of life, and the ambition to make others better than we care to be, and every other little turn of wholesome self-deception—these drop off, and leave us sinking into a sense of having lived, and made a humble thing of it.

Whether this be so or not, upon the 18th day of June in the year 1611, Prince Agasicles came home rather hot, and very tired, and fain for a little sleep, if such there were, to wear out weariness. But still he had heavy work left for that night; as a mighty comet had lately appeared, and scared the earth abundantly; yet now he had two or three hours to spare, and they might as well be happy ones. Therefore he sent for his daughter to come, and see to his food and such like, and then to sit with him some few minutes, and to watch the sunset.

Artemise, still young and lovely, knew of course, from Eastern wisdom, that woman's right is to do no wrong. So that she came at once when called, and felt as a mother ought to feel, that she multiplied her obedience vastly, by bringing all her children. Being in a soft state of mind, the old man was glad to see them all, and let them play with him as freely as childhood's awe of white hair allowed. Then he laid his hand upon Roger, the heir of the house, and blessed him on his way to bed; and after that he had his supper, waited on by Artemise, who was very grateful for his kindness to her children. So that she brought him the right thing, exactly at the right moment, without overcrowding him; and then she poured him sparkling wine, and comforted his weary feet, and gave him a delicious pipe of Persian meconopsis (free from the bane of opium, yet more dreamy than tobacco). Also she sprinkled round him delicate attar of the Vervain



(sprightlier and less oppressive than the scent of roses), until his white beard ceased to flutter, and the strong lines of his face relaxed into soft drowsiness.

Observing thence the proper time, when sweet sleep was encroaching, and haste, and heat, and sudden temper were as far away as can be from a man of Eastern blood, Artemise, his daughter, touched him with the smile which he used to love, when she was two years old and upward; and his thoughts without his knowledge flew back to her mother.

"Father to me, father dearest," she was whispering to him, in the native tongue which charms the old, as having lulled their cradles; "father to me, tell what trouble has together fallen on you in this cold and foreign land."

Melody enough was still remaining, in the most melodious of all mortal languages, for a child to move a father into softer memories, at the sound of ancient music thus revived, and left to dwell.

"Child of my breast," the prince replied, in the very best modern Hellenic, "a strong desire to sleep again hath overcome mine intellect."

"Thus is it the more suited, father, for discourse with such as mine. Let your little one share the troubles of paternal wisdom."

Suasion more than this was needed, and at every stage forthcoming, more skilfully than English words or even looks could render, ere ever the paternal wisdom might be coaxed to unfold itself; and even so it was not disposed to be altogether explicit.

"Ask me no more," he said at last; "enough that I foresee great troubles overhanging this sad house."

"Oh father, when, and how, and what? How shall we get over them, and why should we encounter them? And will my husband or my children——"

The prince put up one finger, as if to say, "ask one thing at a time," the while he ceased not to revolve many and sad counsels in his venerable head, and in his gaze deep pity mingled with a father's pride and love. Then he spoke three words in a language which she did not comprehend, but retained their sound, and learned before her death that they meant this—"Knowledge of trouble trebles it."

"Now, best-loved father," she exclaimed, perceiving that his face was set to tell her very little, "behold how many helpless ones depend upon my knowledge of the evils I must shield them from. It is—nay, by your eyes—it is the little daughter whom you always cherished with such love and care, who now is the cause of a mind perplexed, as often she has been to you. Father, let not our affairs lay such burden on your mind, but spread them out and lighten it. Often, as our saying hath it, oftentimes the ear of folly is the purse for wisdom's gems."

"I hesitate not, I doubt no longer. I do not divide my mind in twain. The wisdom of them that come after me carries off and transcends mine own, as a mountain doth a half-peck basket. Wherefore, my daughter Artemise, wife of the noble Englishman with whom she ran away from Caria, and mother of my five grandchildren, she is worthy to know all that I have learned from heaven; ay, and she shall know it all."

"Father to me dearest, yes! Oh how noble and good of you!"

"She shall know all," continued the prince, with a gaze of ingenuous confidence, and counting on his fingers slowly; "it may be sooner, or it may be later; however, I think one may safely promise a brilliant knowledge of everything in five years after we have completed the second century from this day. But now the great comet is waiting for

me. Let me have my boots again. Uncouth, barbarous, frightful things! But in such a country needful."

His daughter obeyed without a word, and hid her disappointment. "It is only to wait till to-morrow," she thought, "and then to fill him a larger pipe, and coax him a little more perhaps, and pour him more wine of Burgundy."

To-morrow never came for him,

except in the way the stars come. In the morning he was missed, and sought for, and found dead and cold at the end of his longest telescope. In Chanctonbury Ring he died, and must have known, for at least a moment, that his death was over him; for among the stars of his jotting-chart was traced, in trembling charcoal, "*Sepeli, ubi cecidi*"—"Bury me where I have fallen."

#### CHAPTER VIII.

Alice Lorraine, with no small excitement, heard from her father's lips this story of their common ancestor. Part of it was already known to her, through traditions of the country; but this was the first time the whole had been put into a connected narrative. She wondered, also, what her father's reason could be for thus recounting to her this piece of family history, which had never been (as she felt quite sure) confided to her brother Hilary; and, like a young girl, she was saying to herself as he went on—"Shall I ever be fit to compare with that lovely Artemise, my ever-so-long-back grandmother, as the village people call it? and will that fine old astrologer see that the stars do their duty to us? and was the great comet that killed him the one that frightens me every night so? and why did he make such a point of dying without explaining anything?"

However, what she asked her father was a different question from all these.

"Oh papa, how kind of you to tell me all that story! But what became of Artemise—'Lady Lorraine' I suppose she was?"

"No, my dear; 'Mistress Lorraine,' or 'Madame Lorraine' perhaps they called her. The old earldom had long been lost, and Roger, her son, who fell at Naseby, was the

first baronet of our family. But as for Artemise herself—the daughter of the astrologer, and wife of Hilary Lorraine, she died at the birth of her next infant, within a twelve-month after her father; and then it was known why he had been so reluctant to tell her anything."

"Oh I am so sorry for her! Then she is that beautiful creature hanging third from the door in the gallery, with ruches beautifully picked out and glossy, and wonderful gold lace on her head, and long hair, and lovely emeralds hanging down as if they were nothing."

"Yes," said Sir Roland, smiling at his daughter's style of description, "that of course is the lady; and the portrait is clearly a likeness. At one time we thought of naming you after her—'Artemise Lorraine'—for your nurse discovered that you were like her at the mature age of three days."

"Oh papa, how I wish you had! It would have sounded so much nicer, and so beautifully romantic."

"Just so, my child; and therefore, in these matter-of-fact times, so deliciously absurd. Moreover, I hope that you will not be like her, either in running away from your father, or in any other way—except her kindness and faithfulness."

He was going to say, "in her early death;" but a sudden touch



of our natural superstition stopped him.

"Papa, how dare you speak as if any one ever, in all the world, could be fit to compare with you? But now you must tell me one little thing—why have you chosen this very day, which ought to be such a happy one, for telling me so sad a tale, that a little more would have made me cry?"

"The reason, my Lallie, is simple enough. This happens to be the very day when the two hundred years are over; and the astrologer's will, or whatever the document is, may now be opened."

"His will, papa! Did he leave a will? And none of us ever heard of it!"

"My dear, your acquaintance with his character is, perhaps, not exhaustive. He may have left many wills without wishing to have them published; at any rate you shall have the chance, before it grows dark, to see what there is."

"Me! or I—whichever is right?—me, or I, to do such a thing! Papa, when I was six years old I could stand on my head; but now I have lost the art, alas!"

"Now, Alice, do try to be sensible, if you ever had such an opening. You know that I do not very often act rashly; but you will make me think I have done so now, unless you behave most steadily."

"Papa, I am steadiness itself; but you must make allowance for a little upset at the marvels heaped upon me."

"My dear child, there are no marvels; or, at any rate, none for you to know. All you have to do is to go, and to fetch a certain document. Whether you know any more about it is a question for me to consider."

"Oh papa—to raise me up so, and to cast me down like that! And I was giving you credit for having trusted me so entirely! And very

likely you would not even have sent me for this document, if you had your own way about it."

"Alice," Sir Roland answered, smiling at her knowledge of him, "you happen to be particularly right in that conjecture. I should never have thought of sending you to a lonely and forsaken place if I were allowed to send any one else, or to go myself. And I have not been happy at thinking about it ever since the morning."

"My father, do you think that I could help rejoicing in such a job? It is the very thing to suit me. Where are the keys, papa? Do be quick."

"I have no intention, my dear child, of hurrying either you or myself. There is plenty of time to think of all things. The sun has not set, and that happens to be one of the little things we have to look to."

"Oh how very delightful, papa! That makes it so much more beautiful. And it is the astrologer's room, of course."

"My dear, it strikes me that you look rather pale, in the midst of all your transports. Now, don't go if you are at all afraid."

"Afraid, papa! Now you want to provoke me. You quite forget both my age, it appears, and the family I belong to."

"My pet, you never allow us to be very long forgetful of either of those great facts; but I trust I have borne them both duly in mind, and I fear that I should even enhance, most needlessly, your self-esteem, if I were to read you the directions which I now am following. For, strangely enough, they do contain predictions as to your character such as we cannot yet perceive (much as we love you) to have come to pass."

"Oh, but who are the 'we,' papa? If everybody knows it—even grand-mamma, for instance—what pleasure

can I hope to find in ever having been predicted?"

"You may enjoy that pleasure, Alice, as exclusively as you please. Even your grandmother knows nothing of the matter we have now in hand; or else—at least I should say perhaps that, if it were otherwise——"

"She would have been down here, of course, papa, and have marched up to the room herself; but, if the whole thing belongs to one's self, nothing can be more delightful than to have been predicted, especially in glowing terms such as I beg you now, papa, to read in glowing tones to me."

"Alice, I do not like that style of—what shall I call it?—on your part. *Persiflage*, I believe, is the word; and I am glad that there is no English one. It is never graceful in any woman, still less in a young girl like you. Hilary brought it from Oxford first; and perhaps he thought it excellent. Lay it aside now, once and for all. It hopes to seem a clever thing, and it does not even succeed in that."

At these severe words, spoken with a decided attempt at severity, Alice fell back, and could only drop her eyes and wonder what could have made her father so cross upon his birthday. But, after the smart of the moment, she began to acknowledge to herself that her father was right, and she was wrong. This flippant style was foreign to her, and its charms must be foregone.

"I beg your pardon, father dear," she said, looking softly up at him; "I know that I am not clever, and I never meant to seem so."

"Quite right, Alice; never attempt to do anything impossible." Saying this to her, Sir Roland said to himself that, after all, he should like to know very much where to find any girl half so clever as Lallie, or any girl even a quarter so good, and so loving, and so beautiful.

"The sun is almost gone behind the curve of the hill, and the scrubby beech, and the nick cut in the gorse-bush. Alice, you know we only see it for just the Midsummer week like that."

Alice came, with her eyes already quit of every trace of tears; with vanity and all petty feelings melting into larger thought. The beauty of the world would often come around and overcome her, so that she felt nothing else.

"The sun must always be the same," Sir Roland said, rather doubtfully, after waiting for Alice to begin. "No doubt he must always be the same; but still the great Herschel seems to think that even the sun is changing. If he is fed by comets (as our old astronomers used to say), he ought to be doing very well just now. Alice, the sun is above ground still, for people on the hill-top, and there is the comet already kindling!"

"Of course he is, papa; he never waits for the sun's convenience. But I must not say that—I forgot. There would be no English name for it—would there now, papa?"

"You little tyrant, what troubles I would inflict upon you if I studied the stars! But I scarcely know the belt of Orion from the Northern Crown. Astronomy does not appear to have taken deep root in our family; but look, there is part of the sun again emerging under Chaneton! In five minutes more he will be quite gone; now is the time for me to read these queer directions, which contain so poetical an account of you."

Alice, warned by his former words, and reduced to proper humility, did not speak while her father opened the small strip of parchment, at which she had so long been peeping curiously.

"It is written in Latin," Sir Roland said, "and has been handed from father to son unsealed, and as



you see it, from the time of the prince till our time."

"May I see it, papa? What a very clear hand! but you must translate it for me."

"Then here it is:—'To the father and master of the family of Lorraine, whoever shall be in the year, according to Christian computation, 1811, Agasicles Syennesis, the Carian, bids hail. Do thou, on the 18th day of June, when the sun has well descended, or departed'—*decesserit*, the word is—'send thy eldest daughter, without any companion, to the astronomer's *coenaculum*'—why, he never ate supper, the poor old fellow, unless it was the one he died of—and there let her search in a closet or cupboard'—*in secessu muri*, the words are, as far as I can make out—'and she will find a small document, which to me has been in great price. There will also be something else, to be treated *pro re nata*'—that means according to circumstances—and according to the orders in the document aforesaid. The virgin will be brave, and beautiful, ready to give herself for the house, and of swiftly-growing prudence. If there be no such virgin then the need for her will not have arisen. It is necessary that no young man should go, and my document must lie hidden for another century. It is not possible that any one of uncertain skill should be certain.

But there ought to be a great comet also burning in the sky, of the same complexion as the one that makes my calculations doubtful. Farewell, whosoever thou shalt be, from me descended, and obey me."

"Papa, I declare, it quite frightens me. How could he have predicted me, for instance, and this great comet, and even you?"

"Then you think that you answer to your description! My darling, I do believe that you do. But you never shall 'give yourself for the house,' or for fifty thousand houses. Now, will you have anything to do with this strange affair; or will you not? Much rather would I hear you say that you will have nothing to do with it, and that the old man's book may sleep for at least another century."

"Now, papa, you know how much you would be disappointed in me. And do you think that I could have any self-respect remaining? And beside all that, how could I hope to sleep in my bed with all those secrets ever dangling over me?"

"That last is a very important point. With your excitable nature you had better go always through a thing. It was the same with your dear mother. Here are the keys, my daughter. I really feel ashamed to dwell so long on a mere superstition."

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## THE TWO SPERANSKY.

## CONCLUSION.—ELIZABETH.

ELIZAVETA MICHAILOVNA SPERANSKY was now a wife; in 1824 she also became a mother, and we put the fact down here at once, because it is one which coloured her whole future personal life, and one which, long after her father had gone to his rest, must have explained to her the full sanctity of the tie which had existed between him and herself. We have seen that their intercourse, tender and united as it was, had not been positively without a cloud. But Elizabeth had married to please him, and after the birth of her son, Count Michael Speransky paid her his first visit in her home in the provinces. Much was said, but much more must have been then left unsaid between them, while both hearts ached, and while Speransky saw with pain that the presentiment was justified which had once made him say that "no one who had loved him had ever remained happy." It is curious that the reasons should have escaped his perspicacity when he first urged on this marriage. M. Bagréeff's solemn pretensions, his vacuity of mind, and his general nullity as a companion, had an effect on Elizabeth's happiness which endless games of cards could not be supposed to counteract! and it was now Speransky's business to try to ameliorate her lot. M. Bagréeff was, through his interest, elevated to the dignity of senator, then called to St Petersburg, and made Governor of the Bank. It was a bad appointment for the Bank, which, owing to his stupidity, was presently robbed of many millions of roubles by some light-fingered subordinates; but it was good for Elizabeth, as her home was now fixed in the capital.

She was again her father's com-

panion; their house was open to men of letters, and a brilliant society soon grouped itself around them. The historian Karamsine was there, a man fitted by his cultivation, his humanity, and his quasi-liberal ideas, to be the historiographer of Alexander the Blessed; Pouchkine came there also with his beautiful wife, and Adam Michievicz the Pole, whose muse was made vocal by the long sorrows of his country. There was also Bruloff the painter; Gogol the satirist, whose comedies rendered him the Kotzebue of Russian official life; and Zoukovsky the poet. The general circle was lettered, elegant, and *decorated*. The peace of Vienna had restored its principal members to affluence—laurels had been reaped; and if some years ago Count Rostopchine had been constrained to set fire to their "*Mother Moscow*," she, like the rest of the country, had proved herself able to rise, phoenix-like, from her ashes.

But the Great War had had another effect upon society, and its smooth-flowing waters covered some very ugly political secrets. The young men who had been to France had imbibed with enthusiasm the new ideas. The heaven of romanticism and of liberalism was at work in them; and when their term of residence in France was past, many officers of the noble guard returned to Russia, only too full of the new ideas, determined to introduce a constitution, and to give to Russia the benefits (albeit questionable enough in some respects) of their own French experience. Secret societies had sprung up, Freemasons' lodges, unions of the "Public Weal," of "National Pro-



sperty," of the "United Selavonians," with others rejoicing in such ominous names as the "Polish Patriots," and the "Reapers." In November 1825, the Emperor Alexander died at Taganrog, and an oath of allegiance was then taken all over the kingdom to his eldest brother Constantine Pavlovitch. It was not the less well known in St Petersburg that the sceptre of empire was not destined for this, the eldest of the Grand Dukes, but for Nicholas, the greatest and ablest prince of the Romanoff dynasty. Constantine had abdicated, and though the use made of his name by these conspirators may have made him later an object of suspicion to his brother, Nicholas, in November 1825, had no reason to doubt the good faith in which the formal abdication had been made. The eccentric Grand Duke had been wont to say that the crown would never suit him; that, as the nation had only allowed his father to live for three years, they would certainly not endure his rule for three months; and that, as he preferred to preserve his life, he meant to abide by his resolution of never reigning in Russia. That he was now put forward by the Dekabrists was owing to his peculiar incapacity only: it was such that they hoped to have him first as the tool and afterwards as the victim of their projects: and moreover, his seniority was a powerful engine in their hands for preventing the accession of the too capable Nicholas. On the morning of the 14th December, Madame Speransky-Bagréeff drove out in her sledge, but on reaching the Admiralty Square, she found a great crowd assembled there; her horses' heads were turned by two friends; and by the time that she reached her house a rattle of musketry was au-

dible, and the rebellion had become an undeniable fact. The army had revolted. The ringleaders were leavened through with the liberal ideas of which we have spoken; but they had appealed to the soldiers in the name of legitimacy; and persuaded as these were that Constantine was being robbed of his birthright, regiment after regiment had refused to take the oaths to Nicholas. While Elizabeth hurried home, her father had to gallop to the scene of action, where, confronting his revolted legions, stood their new, terrible, and Jove-like Tzar.

By three o'clock that short December day was drawing to its close—the darkness was approaching; still in the great Square, and on the Isaac Bridge, the insurgents made good their stand. Not that they were undismayed. Prince Serge Troubetzkoi, who was to have headed them, was absent; and Obolensky, who replaced him, was neither a warrior nor a strategist. Two Metropolitans in full canonicals had already implored them to lay down their arms; shots had been fired, and Miloradovich and Stürler had fallen on the one side and on the other. At this moment Count Toll\* galloped up to the Emperor, and said to him, "Sire, command that the place be swept by cannon, or resign your throne." The guns were fired; and when the day was done, Nicholas returned to his palace, and to a trembling wife, and to a boy of seven years old, whom he could now first greet as the Tzarévitch of all the Russias. The revolt was quelled;—then came the trial, the sentence, and the execution of the conspirators.

At the head of the list was the name of Prince Serge Troubetzkoi, of the Preobrashensky regiment of Body-Guards; but it included other officers of the Guards, privy

councillors, secretaries, and members of nearly all the noblest families of Russia and Lithuania. Now comes the question, What knowledge, if any, had Speransky of all this mischief? On the night of the 13th December, through what one of his biographers calls a "*fatalité déplorable*," several of the conspirators were dining in his daughter's house. But it is still more remarkable that in the original plan drawn up by the conspirators in Prince Obolensky's house, and on no more remote a day than the 12th December, Speransky was named by them as a member of the provisional government which they intended to establish. Admiral Mordvinof was to have been associated with him.

This fact rests on the evidence of a military man present at the arrangement.\*

Now we may imagine, and it is possible to do so, that Speransky knew nothing of this flattering but highly dangerous preference for himself, and that he was ignorant of the honour in store for him: still it inflicts a shock on the mind when one finds him taking up a high moral and political attitude, and sitting on the tribunal before which these Dekabrist conspirators, young and old, were arraigned. Nicholas Tourgenieff, Confidential Secretary to the Imperial Council, and one of the first batch of thirty-one victims sentenced to be beheaded, thus comments on the fact: "One of the members of the supreme tribunal was Speransky, said to be the cleverest of them all. This is the same man of whom I have spoken in another place. He became, so to speak, the *factotum* of the trial; and he it was who presented the final report to the Emperor, in which his Majesty was begged not to pardon the con-

demned. . . . Speransky, to whom no one can deny many other qualities, did not possess that of courage: in defending me he feared to seem to defend some Liberal principles; and what frightened him most was the fact that, in the eyes of many persons, he was already suspected of entertaining them."

After reading the above, it is difficult not to say to one's self, that if Mademoiselle Speransky had once been ready to act the pretty part of "Elizabeth, the exile of Siberia," her father showed on this occasion his fitness for the less elevated rôle of the celebrated "Vicar of Bray." The explanation of the situation seems to be this: Speransky, the priest's son, had started in life as a theoretical but ambitious Liberal. Between such theories, fostered by the philanthropy of a Tzar, and the secret practices of a conspiracy, whose ends were clearly revolutionary, he became aware of a great and judicious difference; and, moreover, the liberal Tzar, who was wont to say of himself that he "was a happy accident" in Russian history, was dead. The Dekabrists, on their side, had heard of the fame of Speransky's early theories, of his disgrace, and of his banishment. Nay, more—they may have picked up in his daughter's *salon* some of his latest sentiments, such as "my real friends are the poor and lowly, prisoners and exiles;" and they may have been led to reckon on his help in opposing the reactionary rule of Nicholas.

Of course it is understood that the conspirators had cherished no abstract feeling of devotion to Constantine, but were simply determined to oppose the accession of the younger man, who would have but one remedy for Liberal sentiments, and who would set himself once and for all above all

\* Russian Conspirators in Siberia. By Baron R—. Translated by Evelyn St John Mildmay.



laws, ancient or recent. But Speransky, whatever sympathy he might have had with exiles, had had too much personal experience of Siberia ever to put himself again *dans cette galère*. Accordingly he sat on the supreme tribunal, saw five young lives pay the penalty of rebellion, and a long train of political criminals, one hundred and sixteen in all, wend their way to the snowy prison which he knew only too well. Among them was his own secretary, a lad whom the Governor had brought from Siberia with him, and whom he had since treated almost as a son, Madame Speransky-Bagréeff petitioning in vain for his pardon.

In the eyes of the new Tzar, M. Speransky at any rate happily contrived to appear perfectly innocent; and being a very valuable public servant, he continued in harness till his death—one asks one's self, at what sacrifice to self-respect or to principle? since the policy of Nicholas was eminently antipathetic to the ideas he had once entertained. "No dreams, gentlemen, no dreams," the new Tzar had said to the Polish nobles whose heads Alexander had filled with the semblance of a constitution, and with visions of indulgence for their national spirit. If the same words were not precisely addressed to the Russian Liberals, the same idea was often conveyed to them in very cogent methods; and such dangerous topics as the emancipation of the serfs had to be dropped *sine die*.

The old Russian party was now flattered by a Tzar who desired his nobility to speak Russian, who patronised the national dress, and who encouraged a good deal of Philo-Slavonic literature and fashion, provided always these were kept free of Neology and of Liberalism.

Nicholas loved Russia: he believed in himself as her visible head, as the fountain of honour, and as the dispenser, not of justice, but of favour.

He was the very embodiment of autocracy, for he had its majesty, its grace, its charms, and its caprices. There have been many more tyrannical sovereigns in Russia than Nicholas Pavlovitch, but there never has been a Tzar so perfectly arbitrary. Like his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, he had a passion for soldiering in all its details, and he was a martinet in discipline; but he sometimes showed mercy, and he took pleasure in doing so, because such clemency is but another kind of power. He acted and looked his part as no crowned monarch ever has done before or since; and he did it consciously, enjoying the effect which he produced on the mind of the spectator. "Have you no fear?" he once asked a very young maid of honour, whom he found, on the first morning after her introduction to her duties at the palace, perched upon a window-sill, and reading a novel of Mrs Gaskell's aloud to a laughing companion, who seemed to enjoy the jokes in "Cranford" as much as herself. The great Tzar expected to have made more impression even on two young girls! Some such jealous vanity made him very harsh even with women, when they had displeased him. For example, he abhorred Madame Swetchine, on account of her wandering tastes and generally Western habits of thought. A still more serious crime was her apostasy to the Church of Rome, when she became the leader of a faction which sent more than one Russian nobleman into the ranks of the Order of Jesus. Madame Speransky-Bagréeff found him also eminently unfriendly through all the vicissitudes of her career; and in all probability the *fat-alité déplorable* of her ill-selected dinner-party of the 13th December was never forgiven by him.

Once that period of intrigue, disorder, and anxiety was outlived, the literary circle which surrounded the

Minister's daughter was ready to become as brilliant as before ; but Madame Speransky-Bagréeff's biography now becomes in great part that of a landowner and of a mother. Of a landowner, because her father had bought for her an estate called Bowromka ; and because the welfare of Bowromka and its peasants, the rise and fall of prices, the sale of wood, and the erection of model farms, dispensaries, and schools, occupied her time and emptied her purse. M. Bagréeff was as unfortunate as a landlord as he had been as a governor of the Bank ; and in all these capacities he had the misfortune to sink more and more in his wife's esteem. But she had become the mother of three children. Of these the youngest, who was a boy, only lived two years ; but Michael, her first-born, fulfilled all the promise of his youth ; and the education of her only daughter already caused her many hopes and fears, while it occupied her days. For them she wrote her first books, tales for children and short plays ; while the *farouche* temper of Mademoiselle Bagréeff, afterwards Princess Cantacuzene, is probably reflected in 'Irène,' a novel on the benefits of education, which only saw the light in 1857, and which is perhaps the most *Edgeworthian* of all the mother's works.

Of M. Bagréeff all this time she saw but little : very possibly this arrangement may have been one which had met with the consent of both parties : but none the less it probably had its share in intensifying the peculiarities of Mademoiselle Bagréeff's character. Whether caused by quarrels about money, by incompatibility of tastes and tempers, or by still graver wrongs, the mother's estrangement from the father of her children was now complete—so complete that when M. Bagréeff for the last time announced a visit to her,

that visit was not accepted ; and when he died rather suddenly, their daughter only was with him—no reconciliation between her parents having been procured or attempted.

One of the causes which in the beginning may have helped to disunite the couple, and to keep them separate, had been Madame Elizabeth's health. Always delicate, child-bearing and household worries had told greatly upon her strength ; and in 1833, and again in 1834, she had gone to the sea-baths of Skeveningen to recruit. The first of these trips had been the first occasion on which Speransky's daughter crossed the boundaries of "Holy Russia," or trod the soil of one of those Western kingdoms with whose histories and institutions her father had made her acquainted. Did she, like Madame Swetchine, feel that she then breathed a freer air ? She does not say so, but she became a great traveller.

With her, as with many of her countrymen, travel grew at once into a habit and a passion. The already encumbered estate of Bowromka was left to the tender mercies of *intendants*, of whom Madame Speransky-Bagréeff had six in seven years ; and like most of the landowners of her day, she soon found herself deeply in debt to the Government, which is always happy to assist a Russian noble to mortgage his lands and villages.

What, under these adverse circumstances, became of the schools, dispensaries, sugar-factories, and model farms, the biographer of Madame Speransky-Bagréeff, M. Victor Duret, does not say. What it is impossible to conceal is, that her daughter, and her daughter's Greek husband, took her financial measures in quite as bad part as she had ever done the meddling and muddling of her late husband, and that something very like a quarrel was the consequence. None the less, and perhaps all the more for this very



reason, she travelled to Egypt, to the Holy Land—whither she had vowed to make a pilgrimage—to England, to Vienna, to Paris, to Brussels, and to Hungary.

These travels form the ground-plans of many of her novels, and supply much of the local colouring of her works. Take, for example, '*Les Pèlerins Russes, à Jerusalem*,' published at Brussels in 1854. Here Speransky's daughter puts out a great deal of her strength, and in her sketch of the deacon, in "*Une nuit au Golgotha*," she has left a touching portrait of the priest's son, Michael Gramatine, who, in the seminary of Vladimir, had once formed ambitious hopes, and who had lived to realise many of them for, and with, and in herself. The book is written in French. Prosper Mérimée writes to her to congratulate her, and to praise its careful and vigorous idioms. It has added, he says, to his wish to know Russia and the Russians; but he has one reproach to make to her, one fault to find,—it is all too sad; and "life is such a sad thing, that clever people ought to be compelled always to write gay things, so as to divert one a little from things as they are."

But Madame Elizabeth was sad; and she had good cause to be so. Something not quite unlike fame was now coming to her from her writings; but then fame is, as Madame de Staël, who was a good judge, averred, "a royal mourning, in purple, for happiness." Furthermore, the authoress was poor, and she had a thousand troubles at home which, had she been on the spot, would have been vexatious enough to arrange, and which at a distance were hopeless. She was on bad terms with her daughter, as she had been with her husband; she had frequent attacks of rheumatic gout, an enemy which is apt to hang upon the flanks of all brain-

workers; she was in no favour at Court, and that in a country where Court favour is the all in all: she might, if she liked, change her skies, but she could not change her mind; publishers worried her, and editors occasionally mangled and dismembered her pieces; and by her fireside, in two empty chairs—those of her father and of her son—there sat the shadow feared by man.

Count Michael Speransky's death, in 1839, had been at least a natural one; but young Michael Bagréeff had been killed in the Caucasus by a comrade who was maddened with drink, and who, in the dark, drew his sword upon the boy who had tried to prevent a drunken riot and a scandalous fight. His mother never recovered from this shock. Her intelligence survived it, and her energy remained, along with the necessities for work, for money, and for intercourse with her fellow-workers; but her heart was broken. It may not have shown much in her novels; but there is a little book which has only been published since her death, and which, as the '*Livre d'une Femme*,' lets one into many secrets of the woman's life. We see its loneliness. Then, after some sharp struggles to forgive the enemies of her father, and the murderer of her son, comes a gentler sense of pity and of humility—some dust to put on her own head—many tears to give to past errors, and a lingering passionate return to that great and tender love which had subsisted between her father and herself. One says a return, because at the time of Count Michael Speransky's death many circumstances must have conspired to divert her sense of pain into other channels than the purely filial one. He had died full of years, with his "Swod" or code a completed monument for his renown; full, we may say, too, of honour—that is, of such honour

as despotism has to bestow on a man who has been, through two reigns, at once its good angel and its tool, its favourite, its adviser, and its victim. Full, certainly, of experience and of labour. Both health and strength for some months gave signs of distress; but his august master would not allow him to interpret these as a warning to cease from all literary and responsible work. And so the Minister died in harness, after an apoplectic stroke, on the 23d of February 1839. The Tzar, who grieved for him, or who at least missed him, would not, however, befriend his daughter. Elizabeth was poor, but the Emperor Nicholas gave her no pension; and M. Bagréeff, who had accumulated some capital, and who had built expectations upon the position of his father-in-law, now took arbitrary possession of any fortune which could be said to belong to his wife. He was dissatisfied with its amount, and Elizabeth was displeased with the uses to which he appropriated it. High words ensued, and the separation which we know of followed as a consequence. Thus it had happened that in its first years Elizabeth's filial sorrow was greatly turned to bitterness, and deformed by anger both against her husband and against the Government of the Tzar, which had possessed itself of all her father's papers and literary remains. It was only in later years, and when this soreness had ceased to be felt, that her filial feelings were able to reassert themselves in all their simplicity. Certainly Madame Speransky-Bagréeff is never so much a woman, and never more truly attractive, than in those passages where her grief as a daughter and as a mother finds vent. Many of the pages of the '*Livre d'une Femme*' are devoted to these themes, and many more to meditations on the Scriptures—a study

which she had always shared, as a girl, with M. Speransky, and which now occupied many of the saddened years of her declining life.

M. Speransky had interested himself greatly in the translation of the Bible into Russ; but in one of his Siberian letters he begs his daughter not to read the Word of God except in Slavonic—that is, in the time-honoured language and idioms appropriated to the service of the "*Orthodox*" Church. The vulgar tongue, he says, deprives the sacred writings of their majestic beauty, and lays them open to the jarring of vulgar and trivial associations.

His own commentary on the Gospel of St John, Elizabeth was wont to render into German; and many a long winter's day had the father and daughter spent over the MSS., which the latter was afterwards to preserve with pious care. The work was probably intended for publication—at least, M. Speransky seems to hint at this when he says, "Your thoughts about inspiration are so attractive that I am tempted to write an essay upon them, and to demonstrate that inspiration is not an illusion, but in truth a very real and substantial property of the Spirit. We can speak of this when we meet, and when I am able to write the book which I have been thinking of for years." The book never saw the light; but 200 *folio* sheets of commentary remained in his daughter's care, and often afforded texts for the remarks and notes which abound in the '*Livre d'une Femme*.' But the daughter is less "*orthodox*" than the father. For example, we find Speransky dwelling with pleasure on the belief in the Guardian Angel; and though he has been accused of holding Protestant ideas, he often speaks of Protestants with great reprobation, as persons who, "under the pretence of a greater



spirituality, have refined their faith into mere abstract propositions, banished gentle and devout feelings from religion, and left it blunt, coarse, and spiritless." Elizabeth has a good deal of this same mysticism; but she often differs freely from the teaching of her own Church, though she was never tempted to do like Madame Swetchine, and to abjure it for that of any other communion. It is doubtful, however, whether the '*Livre d'une Femme*' would be considered as an altogether orthodox work in any Church. It is full of curious speculations, especially on the subject of the transmigration of souls; yet when read in the light of the events of Elizabeth's life and of her mistakes, some of its confessions are very pathetic.

It is difficult through the medium of a translation to convey any idea of the excellence of style or of the grace which distinguishes some of Madame Speransky-Bagréeff's sayings. She is a less powerful and a less eloquent writer than Madame Swetchine; and her writings, with the exception of one novel, of which we propose to give a sketch, are less likely to live than are the letters of her friend,—letters all alive with those strong sympathies, and with that ardent love of God and of her neighbour, which made Madame Swetchine a real power in the society of her day. Elizabeth's style is more studied, and throughout her whole career her paragraphs sound as if they had been composed with a view to her father's praise or blame. Both women were very sensitive to the approach of old age. Madame Swetchine's remarks on it have the sustained dignity of a mind determined to rise above that last weakness, and to see always more of heaven through "chinks that time has made;" but Elizabeth

lets a cry escape from her now and then,—“See,” she exclaims, “what generally fills up a woman's life once youth is past; sicknesses of the body, sorrows of the soul, regrets for the past, and fears for the future! But let women resign themselves; let them crown themselves with thorns, and walk without murmuring in the austere way of the Cross.”

Against her own share of these haunting fears and regrets Madame Speransky-Bagréeff was still also able to defend herself by work, and by the friendships which her works had helped to gather round her.

Of all her novels, the one which is most likely to live is '*Une famille Tongouse*.' It is thoroughly original, and written with great spirit; while the scenes, the characters, and the treatment of them all carry her readers into a new country, and give us the pleasure of new associations,—and yet the simple plot is founded on those feelings which, as Lamartine says, “keep the heart of humanity ever young.” Its Siberian details have evidently been elaborated by Madame Speransky-Bagréeff as a labour of love, and many of them are very curious.

She begins by telling us that on the very confines of civilisation, and on the borders of the Lake Baikal, which the Cossacks and Siberians dignify with the name of the Holy Sea, there dwelt in a small *Stanitza*, or commune, two families distinguished by their labours and virtues. The first was that of the village priest, the *père* Jossiff, with his gentle wife; the other was that of the Cossack, Wassili-Ivanoff, with a helpmate who might have sat for one of the Biblical portraits, so virtuous, hard-working, and devoted was she. Wassili (Basil) was a mighty hunter, a faithful subject of the distant Tzar, an orthodox believer, a suc-

cessful fisher and fowler, and a good judge of furs. His days and nights spent in the forest or on the borders of the lake, had brought him often in contact with the stray Tongouses who ventured near the Christian *Stanitzas*, and exchanges of furs and of good offices had passed between him and these nomads. The Tongouses, like the Bouriates, occupy a good deal of the country between China and the Lake Baikal. They are now diminishing in numbers and courage; but their numbers, as far as they could be ascertained, were, in 1857, somewhere about 50,000 males. They wander from frontier to frontier, and sometimes pay *tessak*, or tribute of furs, to both emperors, of Russia and of China. Some of the tribes are more warlike than others; but the neighbours of the Cossack Wassili belonged principally to the less noteworthy *Kellems*, or solitary Tongouses, whom the Siberians both hated as pagans, and despised because they were so little formidable. Jossiff, the priest, often preached toleration and kindness to his flock; but it was in vain that he told them that example was the best way of making proselytes. Except Wassili-Ivanoff, no one had any charity for the stealthy wandering Tongouses who trapped the game of the forest, caught the fish of the Holy Sea, worshipped *Shaitans*, or devils, and were led by *Shamans*, necromantic priests, half soothsayers, half impostors, and whole rogues. Unlike the Bouriates, the Tongouses have not been elevated to Bouddhism, and their superstitions are as debased as they are cruel.

Wassili the Cossack died, and his widow Salomèa and his son Alexei were left to mourn his loss by an accident in hunting. But it soon seemed that they and their Christian neighbours in the

*Stanitzas* were not alone in their grief. The good deeds of Wassili still followed him. Some grateful Tongouse brought offerings by night to his grave—fossil ivory, and furs and fruits; and at last, most embarrassing of all, a basket was found on the tomb, containing an infant—a little girl. The fashion of adopting children is not uncommon in Russia—so little so, that their service-book contains a liturgical office for the ceremony of adoption: and Salomèa was rich; but then to adopt a child of the devil, a little heretic! was that to be thought of? The whole commune was in an uproar; and public opinion, which was represented in it by the Attaman Stéphan-Grégorieff, and still more by his talkative spouse, was set against the little girl, called alternately “pig,” and heretic, and changeling! However, the foundling, baptised Marie, continued to live in Salomèa’s house, where, though she certainly exhibited no signs of vice, or of anything but previous starvation, her gestures and looks were all considered unearthly; “and,” quoth Salomèa, her unwilling mother, “your Reverence must admit, that for a widow who fears God, such a visitation is not agreeable.”

The worst part of it was that the little Tongouse was a girl. Even his Reverence felt that to be a trial. Public opinion in the mouth of the Attaman again observed, that had it been a boy they might have made a good Cossack out of a bad heathen, and had a good soldier for their father the Tzar; but this was only a poor soul, of the female sex, and the most they could do for it was to deliver it from Satan and his *Shamans*. “Souls are of no gender,” replied the *père* Jossiff, who accordingly made the education of little Marie his especial care. Salomèa had to resign herself; and Marie grew up, a child of the Church, but



also a child of the forest, where it was thought she had rendezvous with more than with its birds and berries. That was hard on Salomèa; but what was more serious was, that Alexei in process of time loved the meek little foundling, and that she loved him in return with the passion of her lonely life and fantastic nature. He knew that her Tongouse family still lived near them; he had already had to defend the girl from the machinations of her tribe and of its *Shaman*; but he asked her not the less to be his wife. They married, after some unwillingness on the part of the girl, lest she should bring more trouble on his house,—and then Marie's sorrows began. She felt all the stain of her strange heathen parentage, and got to dread the same blot on her child when she should become a mother. Alexei stood by her; but she saw that she had not brought him happiness, and sorrow ate away day by day the Tongouse's sleep, her strength, and her beauty;—for in spite of her Mongolian descent, Marie was very pretty, and was as gentle as she was pretty. Then Alexei also began to pine. The *Shaman* had laid spells on him, his mother said—on her “red sun, her little soul!”—and darker and darker grew the horizon of Marie's life. Then her heathen kinsfolk dogged her, and the *Shaman* cursed her, and tried to terrify her; but Marie was a Christian, and would never cast in her lot with his cruel and filthy rites. Then, to make the matter worse, it seemed that among the *Yourts* of the Tongouses she had a brother, and that they had long known and met each other in the forest. Hassour dai feared the *Shaman* more than Marie did; and though, in the fulness of time, he too joined the Christian community, he was anything but an acceptable addition to Salomèa's family. Alexei

was constantly in trouble on his wife's account; and his mother was so embittered by all the results of his marriage, that he hardly knew whether to grieve or not when Marie's child died. “Sleep, my child,” she sang to its little corpse; “thou shalt sleep quietly under the damp sod. Thy mother does not weep. An orphan in a strange place, she would not wish thee the same fate; sown with sorrows, watered with tears, and surrounded with griefs as with a wall, we do not belong to this place.” Finally, Marie died, leaning on the arms of the priest and of her faithful Alexei. “Do not mourn for me, Alexei Wassiliwich; I belong to a frail race, and have little life in me. The little joy I have ever had has come from your love, as well as from those hopes which make my passage to another world easy.” “Mother,” she added, turning to Salomèa, who was weeping in a corner, “grant me your prayers. I leave you your son. He is quite young; he will bring you from beyond the seas a daughter whom you can love, and then you will be able to remember without bitterness your kindness in adopting a poor Tongouse orphan. Put my brother's arrow into my grave. I am the last of my family—of that silent and solitary race which the world holds so cheap. *Père Jossiff*, pray for your spiritual child.”

Alexei, adds Madame Speransky-Bagrèeff, enlisted, and went to the war in the Crimea. “This is a sad story,” she concludes, “but wild life is on this wise; and the strange fusion of races which has been going on for centuries in Siberia (about which Europe troubles itself not at all), does give rise to such episodes.” Of the story which we have so rapidly sketched here, some of the pages are written with as much power as pathos.

Written in French, and published

in Paris or Brussels, as Madame Speransky-Bagréeff's books were, their subjects were generally Russian. Her '*Vie de Château dans l'Ukraine*' is a picture of domestic life in the provinces, such as she had lived it; and her '*Iles de la Neva*' is a description of some of the environs of St Petersburg, familiar enough to herself, if new to her readers. It was not published till after the death of the Emperor Nicholas, and it contains a notice of him. Describing the fortress of SS. Peter and Paul, under whose walls the traveller is supposed to be floating, she recapitulates its great dead—Peter and Catharine, and the Emperor Alexander. "But," she adds, "he who was last laid there was the greatest of all. He has beaten even his ancestor, for he has conquered for himself a place in the hearts of his people. His private virtues, his ardent faith and piety, his love of his country, his zeal for her interests, his incessant efforts for her glory and prosperity," all these things, she says, "will secure him an imperishable memory." If these were Madame Bagréeff's sentiments towards the great Tzar, they were by no means reciprocated; and her loyalty made her forget that when Nicholas died, the country was suffering cruelly, both in men and money, from a war into which his ambitious temper had hurried her, and which had not even been successful. However, Madame Speransky-Bagréeff did not spare her praise. Almost immediately after the death of the Emperor she published an account of his last hours, of the funeral, and of the demonstrations of feeling made by the populace of St Petersburg. The paper had a certain popularity; but, read some years after the event, it fails to please. It is too much written to order—it ex-

aggerates; and then again, perhaps because it was written to be read in high places, it naturally misses many of the striking and almost terrible details of that august death-bed and funeral. Many of these details are now woven in with the legends of a people peculiarly impressionable to signs and tokens; many more have become matter of history; while some remain engraven only in the memories of those who looked for the last time on that colossal corpse before it was consigned to the fortress of Peter and Paul.

In 1856, Madame Speransky-Bagréeff travelled, and visited many of her literary friends in Paris and in Germany. It is pleasant to think that in the last year of her life she saw grouped around her women like Madame Swetchine and Madame Soldan, and men like M. de Falloux, Fallmerayer, Grillparzer, and Werner. From Vienna she made another attempt to win the favour or notice of her own Court. She offered to the Emperor Alexander II. the whole of the political papers and MSS. of the late Count Speransky. The offer was graciously received; and a pension was at last granted to the daughter of one of the best public servants Russia has ever possessed. A return to St Petersburg was then planned for the spring of 1857; but Elizabeth's health was beginning, like her father's, to suffer from the effects of constant mental exertion. Inflammation of the brain proved fatal to her at Vienna on the 3d of April, and put an end to the separation which had so long existed between her and her father, and the son she had so bitterly mourned. At last, as the Russian proverb expresses it, "with two hands crossed on the breast, labour was done."



## HORATIAN LYRICS.—NO. III.

HORACE TO VIRGIL.

ODE III. OF BOOK I.—AD VIRGILIUM.

“*Sic te Diva, potens Cypri.*”

MAY that lovable Goddess, the Cyprian Queen,  
And the brothers of Helen, that bright constellation;  
And from every foul wind may old Æolus screen  
Thy bark, for he rules all the winds in creation.

And O ship—that art trusted e'en now to convey  
My Virgil to Athens, the land of the stranger—  
Bring thy passenger home in all safety, I pray,  
And save the best half of my Being from danger.

That man must have had a thrice-fortified heart  
Of oak or of brass, who first tried navigation;  
From the shelter of port who had courage to part,  
And to face a sou'-wester without consternation.

A wind that, when met by his foe the nor'-east,  
Lays about in a way that is perfectly frantic;  
Lashes Adria's waves till they're foaming like yeast,  
And rouses or soothes the uncertain Atlantic.

What manner of death could that mariner dread,  
Who could look the sea-snake in the face without winking;  
Who could gaze on the breakers, with foam-shivered head,  
As they rose all around him, and dreamt not of shrinking?

In vain a wise Providence severed the lands,  
And girdled them round with the streams of old Ocean;  
Since to shipbuilding men turned their impious hands,  
And would find, if they could, the Perpetual Motion.

Mankind are in mischief a go-ahead race,  
For ever inventing and hunting for evil;  
Prometheus—I cite him in proof of my case—  
Brought fire down to mortals, in league with the Devil.

And ever since fire was brought down from the skies,  
Consumption and fevers have worried the nations;  
Man's life has grown short since the baking of pies,—  
He has ruined his stomach by cooking his rations.

Then Dædalus tried to make way through the air  
Upon wings—a device not conceded to mortals;

There is nothing too hard for a bold man to dare,  
 Since Hercules burst e'en through Acheron's portals.

In our folly we try feats of daring and dread,  
 In aerial cars through the firmament driven;  
 We call down the lightnings of Jove on our head,  
 For our crimes try too sorely the patience of Heaven.

KNAPDALE.

## ODE III. OF BOOK II.

IN WHICH THE POET SUGGESTS A PICNIC.

"Æquam memento rebus in arduis servare mentem."

KEEP a stout heart when times are bad, my boy,  
 And don't forget when things are looking better,  
 To guard against extravagance in joy,  
 For Death *will* come—a foe no man can fetter—

Whether your life has passed in cheerless gloom,  
 Or 'midst the song and dance and mirth and revel;  
 Unmindful that for ever gapes the tomb,  
 Where every man at last will find his level.

Then—to a nook where aged trees entwine  
 Their mingling arms, and cast a grateful shadow;  
 And crystal streams leap forth to cool your wine,  
 Then run, exulting, towards the sunny meadow—

Bring wine and olives, and too short-lived flowers,  
 And every choice invention of kind pleasure;  
 While young and rich, and while the Sister-powers  
 Leave still unclipped your life's uncertain measure.

For you must quit your country-house and club,  
 River and park, and well-beloved plantations;  
 And all you die possessed of—there's the rub—  
 When you are gone, must go to your relations.

Art thou a millionaire? Canst trace thy blood  
 Right upwards to the Conquest?—'tis no matter;  
 Still you must die and cross death's sable flood,  
 Just like a pauper, or a common "hatter."

Our lines in one great Central Station meet;  
 From out the dread urn each one's ticket's shaken  
 Sooner or later; and our final seat  
 In the Down Train must certainly be taken  
 When the bell tolls.

KNAPDALE.



## LORD STANHOPE AND THE HISTORIANS OF QUEEN ANNE'S REIGN.

WHY is it that the reign of Queen Anne is so attractive both to the writer and the reader of history? There are many reasons for this, as we shall presently see; but there is a common cause that gives strength and unity to them all. It is the earliest historical epoch that blends in with our own time, and presents us with historical glories of heroism, genius, and statesmanship, belonging, as it were, to our own age, and stirring us as the history that passes around us, with the freshness and impulse of that present, wherein our countrymen, our friends, and kindred—ourselves perhaps—are participators.

The period belongs to that eighteenth century, remembered by the old among us in our youth, and crowded with memorials of grand historical events still recent and fresh. But it is not in sound alone that Queen Anne's reign has its place in the histories that have in them more of the present than the past. If we go back fifteen years from the accession of Queen Anne, and get behind the Revolution, we are in a history that seems to carry us further away from Queen Anne's reign than Queen Anne's reign is from Queen Victoria's. The Reformation, the great Civil War, the Protectorate, the Restoration, and the Revolution, had not yet finished the work that was to be done by successive convulsions, each shaking society to pieces before it could readjust itself after the latest shattering. But in Queen Anne's day all had settled down into the order that still exists. In politics, in literature, in social life, we are all at home, as it were, and among our own people. If the political life were uneventful, the literature debased, the social

life vapid, there might be little in the epoch to interest or attract us. But all its attributes are stamped with grandeur and energy. It is full of rapid action, of powerful sensations, and of great events. And it is when these are not viewed through the apathetic influence of remoteness, as the deeds of a past and indistinctly-chronicled age, or of a distant people, with natures and customs unkindred to our own, but as the affairs of our own time and our own land, that there is present so large a fund of interest to welcome the history of them.

The affluence of this historical region cannot, we apprehend, be contemplated without envy by authors whose lot it is to labour in more arid districts; those, for instance, where they have to gather their materials through the sort of quarrying process termed archæology. "Nations as well as men arrive at maturity by degrees; and the events which happen during their infancy or early youth cannot be recollected, and deserve not to be remembered." So spake Principal Robertson when he gracefully gave the whole affair the go-by as "dark and fabulous;" just as your prosperous gentleman evades participation in the lot of those who have to struggle with hard work and poverty. There is, indeed, in the arider regions of historical investigation, something strikingly akin to the struggles of genteel poverty striving to hide the baser elements of its lot. In the endeavour to cope with the richer neighbour, every little trifle that is not doomed to perpetual sordid use is marshalled and displayed. Whatever has glitter or form or cost about it is posed to catch the eye, like

poor Caleb Balderstone's tin flagon. And yet when all is done there is a hardness and thinness visible to every spectator, and a pity is inspired by the palpably meagre effect of all the sedulous efforts to accomplish by diligence and cunning what wealth alone can realise.

Such being the doom of historical poverty to those who grope into the "dark and fabulous," if it be in their destinies to reach such a period as Britain in the first fifteen years of the eighteenth century, they are to be congratulated as those who have emerged from poverty to the sudden acquisition of great riches. So great is the affluence of this historical reign, that it gives to all comers with an open hand. There is no occasion for jostling—each workman may separately reap a plentiful harvest. There is room and opportunity for the stately historic march of a Gibbon or a Macaulay. But there is abundant material, also, for the accomplished minute criticism and exposition of a Benjamin Disraeli or a Thackeray. Hence many historians have handled the period in many and various ways, so that there is no occasion for those invidious comparisons that cannot be helped when one author does over again the work that has been done by another, or undertakes that which some master-hand has not lived to finish. There are many thoroughly meritorious histories of Queen Anne's reign, and the latest—Lord Stanhope's—is the best of all. It has features and merits that separate it as completely from the others, as if it dealt with regions on the opposite side of the globe. While theirs is either the lamp-odoured work of the recluse or the passionate outcry of the political gladiator of the age, his is the estimate of a statesman and patrician of our own days, who, practised in State affairs and the ways of the Court, can with

an easy grace take the estimate of like affairs passing in another age.

Setting down Lord Stanhope's book, and taking up another of a different order of merit—Alison's '*Life of Marlborough*'—we have a consciousness of the breadth and fertility of this historical field. The historian of the great war of later times was tempted away from his own chosen ground by what had ever a fascination for him—the career of a great man doing great deeds; and he followed up this career in the brilliant flowing style that came so naturally to his pen, and harmonised so well with the mighty and stirring stories he loved to tell.

It is true that in the Court itself the materials that make the great picturesque epochs of our history do not come up, or rather do not appear, in their usual garb and decorations. We have not, as in Mary Tudor, a grim she-bigot unconsciously feeding the flames of fanaticism to the perpetration of cruelties and slaughters that carry terror and depression over the whole land. Nor have we one like her sister, with wayward strength of will, in her wild caprices torturing wise statesmen, and driving them to their wits' end, till they are made her accomplices in the death of that rival whose career she followed with hatred and envyings, broken in upon by lurid glances of no less fatal sympathy with her struggles as a royal sister. Nor is Queen Anne in any way like to that royal sister her ancestress; nor can we even imagine the good queen, under any possible conditions, affording us a like romance of passion, turbulence, and crime.

But we have in that period a thoroughly picturesque self-made queen in Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough. Behold her as she blooms in the canvas of Kneller. After the hard features of warriors



and statesmen—after even the worldly and anxious features of Court beauties—here is simpleness at last, as if we had alighted on it at a cottage-door—a veritable Phoebe Mayflower, with nature's bloom upon her cheeks, beautiful in her simplicity. It cannot but cross the gazer's thoughts to ask if this can be she who ruled a sovereign with an iron will, until her despotism, becoming intolerable to its good-natured victim, was at last cast off with a revulsion that shook Europe through and through. Here is the face of the only living being that could affect with fear the heart of the great conquering duke. In him it was the fear that should rather be called timidity—the timidity of a deep affection that is ever apprehending possibilities of change or calamity. But on others she cast real practical terror in her power and its vindictive use; and when material power had passed away, in the poisoned shafts of a piercing and envenomed wit. Again, can this be old Sarah, who, alone in her grandeur and wealth, greedy and grasping, adding field unto field, burying herself in bonds, bills, and debentures, could cast a scornful gift of ten thousand pounds at the Boanerges of St Stephen's, to encourage him in his fierce philippics against her great political foe? Remembering all these things, a change seems to have swept over those lines of innocence and beauty. It is somewhat as in the old romances, when insensibly the angel form resolves itself into the demon's. Under the blooming cheeks, and rosy lips, and full lively eyes, we seem to trace the latent lines of hardness and fierceness that strengthened themselves into the character of the great Sarah.

And then how grand is the historical figure that comes forth to us in her husband, the Conquering

Duke! In no one else—not even in George Washington—have we so grand a combination of the most valuable qualities in the man of action,—the heroic soldier, the consummate tactician, the imperturbable and sagacious diplomatist, the wise, firm, and liberal home statesman. In no great commander do we find so much of duty and so little of self. His career is a great lesson, wherein statesmen should learn how to suppress that diseased element in every public service that looks to the claims of the man rather than those of the country. It is in military office, where it is the most dangerous, that this diseased source of action is the rifest. Over and over again has the claims of this man or that man to promotion or command weighed against the risk of a defeated project and the loss of many human lives. There was none of this in Marlborough. He took ever the place assigned to him. When Dutch deputies were selfish and unreasonable, and he might put them to shame or paralyse them by some great blow dealt against their consent, he would not peril the common cause to enhance the lustre of his own military renown. He gave way with graceful alacrity to all humours and ambitions and interests, without a thought for himself, if it seemed conducive ultimately to the success of the great interests at stake that he should give way. There is a pleasant Castor-and-Pollux conception about his co-operation with Prince Eugene—two men, each an independent commander-in-chief, yet both working together through a long succession of great warlike operations in perfect harmony, without a single interruption. No doubt Eugene was a great man among commanders generally; but he was far below the level of his colleague. It suited his great companion's policy, however, that they should

be counted in all things as equals. One less endowed with a high sense of duty would have either bowed the young prince down to his place as a subordinate, or would have driven him from his command, to be replaced by some tried soldier of lower birth who would fall naturally into his place. But Marlborough accepted him in the high place due, if he could hold it, to his birth and nationality, and trained and helped him to the performance of brilliant achievements.

Marlborough had an abundant store of the minor social virtues. He was humane, not only in the negative sense of abstinence from infliction, but in the positive sense of investing labour and thought and self-sacrifice in the prevention or mitigation of human suffering. He was socially tolerant and polite abroad, and an affectionate husband and father at home. He was peaceful and unfactionous as a public citizen. He bore without a murmur the sudden check upon his grand career. He had his step firmly placed on French soil, and inevitably he would have marched onwards and dictated to Louis the Grand in Paris. What history would have been had the events of 1815 and 1870 been thus forestalled we can but guess; but it is a great thing, in taking the incidents that enable us to take the measure of a man's character and capacity, to know how nearly it had been done, and how benignly the great hero obeyed the order to halt and return.

And yet we find all this grandeur and beauty of character stained with foul reproaches—reproaches of falsehood, of treachery, and of greed developing itself in absolute acts of peculation. Surely no human character that ever crossed the stage of life has stronger claim for full and close examination, both of its virtues and its defects. There

never was a stronger claim on the renowned maxim—"Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice." For any of the allowances and palliations conceded to the weaknesses of genius there is no room here. The strong commanding nature of Marlborough's practical genius neither invites nor deserves palliation. His strength did not run in the wild wayward currents that drifted natures like that of Charles XII. or of Nelson to success or ruin.

But if the examination of such a character should be rigid and remorseless, it should be made in measurements according to the dimension of the character. The servant in plush should be honest and faithful, and so should the right honourable servant of the Crown, who works as a Cabinet Minister; but we measure the honesty and fidelity of the two with separate scales. For Marlborough, we require to take a rule of measurement far beyond that of even an ordinary Minister of the Crown. He was one of the great powers of Europe, guided by the influences rather of a sovereign than of a sovereign's servant. It was an age when high command was almost exclusively the prerogative of royal persons. The organisation of armies was adjusted so as jealously to exclude from the command of large forces men who had not been trained to the accomplishment of command, as apart from the mere routine of field duty. But, among the fighting German States, it was only the members of royal houses that had the opportunity of imbibing this high class of military education. Yet here was the son of an English gentleman stepping into supreme command over all of them with the easy grace of one born in the purple. He had members of reigning houses under him in subordinate command—such as



Prince Louis of Baden and the Prince of Holstein. The jealous Dutch deputies solemnly conceded in their communications with him the etiquettes due to a sovereign. He called on that madcap Charles XII., as one friend on another, patted him on the back, and drew him off from some of the wildest and most dangerous of his eccentricities. Then Marlborough became himself a sovereign prince. He was invested with the principality of Mindelheim on the Danube, near that town of Hochstadt where he gained his crowning victory. He bore upon his coat-armorial the double-headed eagle of the sovereign princes of the Holy Roman Empire. When baffled in his design to march on Paris, there might have opened to him such a career as that followed by Wallenstein; but his nature soared above all such projects of wayward and mischievous ambition.

These few remarks go only to the point, not that his character should be spared in the examination of his conduct because of his greatness, but that it should be tested by other measures than those applicable to the ordinary run of respectabilities and disrespectabilities. To the adept in geological, mineralogical, and chemical science, the mammoth and the encrinite must both be examined with an equal devotion to abstract truth; yet the phenomena of the two will be found at distant extremes of animal nature. So of the basaltic crystallisations of the Giant's Causeway, and the specimens of fluor-spar or crystallised agates in the mineralogist's cabinet. It is the misfortune of history that there are disturbing elements in such inquiries; and the greater the historical nature to be examined, the more powerful are the distorting influences. This is not the place where an attempt can be made to

bring the whole question of Marlborough's character and conduct to what in parliamentary and diplomatic language is called "a satisfactory conclusion." There would be far too much elaborate establishment of matter of fact, and of close criticism in its tenor when it is established, to be accomplished in a casual paper.

We can but look on his character and career from without, saying a word on the qualities of grandeur and beauty that adorn them; and perhaps these can hardly be better felt than in reading the not enthusiastic estimate of him by two men who knew him—both great men—both unlike to him, and unlike to each other. The one of these was Bolingbroke, who said of him: "He was the soul of the Grand Alliance against the French. Although *un homme nouveau*—a private individual—a subject—he acquired by his talent and activity a greater influence in public affairs than his high birth, established authority, and the crown of England, had procured for the Prince of Orange. Not only were all the parts of that great machine preserved by him more entire, and in a state of more complete union, but he, in a manner, animated the whole, and communicated to it a more rapid and better sustained movement. To the protracted and often disastrous campaigns which had taken place under the Prince of Orange, succeeded warlike scenes full of action; and all those in which he himself had the direction were crowned with the most brilliant success. He showed himself at once the greatest general and the most skilful minister of his time."

This is the saying of a statesman, his rival and enemy. The other is from a statesman too; but he speaks in the other character, more esteemed by himself, of a master of

the ceremonies. If a philosopher were said to be a good dancer, we would take a dancing-master's certificate on the point; so in the case of good riding, we would a huntsman's or a jockey's, as the case might be. So also, in the question of a man's possession of "the graces," we are safe in the hands of Chesterfield. Of Marlborough he said: "The Graces protected and promoted him." "His manner was irresistible." "It was by this engaging graceful manner that he was enabled during all the war to connect the various and jarring powers of the Grand Alliance, and to carry them on to the main object of the war, notwithstanding their private and separate views, jealousies, and wrong-headedness. Whatever Court he went to—and he was often obliged to go to restive and refractory ones—he brought them into his measures. The Pensionary Heinsius, who governed the United Provinces for forty years, was absolutely governed by him. He was always cool, and nobody ever observed the least variation in his countenance. He could refuse more easily than others could grant; and those who went from him the most dissatisfied as to the substance of their business, were yet charmed by his manner, and as it were comforted by it." \*

When his victorious career was suddenly stopped, and the Treaty of Utrecht carried, there was much lamentation on the one side, and but little exultation on the other, since it was not a creditable story to boast about that a waiting-maid had done it. And yet when we look back to it at this time, it is difficult to say that the treaty was a permanent calamity to Britain. We do not deal much in abstract glory, not deeming it a valuable

commodity unless it is the companion of duty and public benefit. Even a successful march to Paris might have brought more perplexity than permanent benefit to the British empire. The leaving the Bourbons on the throne of Spain, if a calamity, was not a measurable calamity: the country, if it might have had better, might have had worse governors; and in any case, the character of the governors it was to have could not be so weighed and anticipated that the one could be pronounced so much more valuable than the other as to justify a bloody war. Before the treaty, Marlborough had already done the real work whence Europe profited. It was to drive the demon of conquest and supremacy out of Louis XIV. and his successors on the throne of France, by showing that the power which seemed to aim at a new universal empire was assailable and subduable.

This was a service felt less by Britain than by Germany and the minor States of the Continent. At home, Marlborough's victorious career conferred on his country a blessing of another and a less dubious or questionable kind. Without it the union of England and Scotland might not have been effected; and the supposition of what might have been to both countries had the reign of Queen Anne passed without the accomplishment of that healing measure, opens up one of the most dreary and desperate vistas ever realised by those historical speculators who deal in the conditions that might have been but were not. Such speculations may be ridiculed as vain and useless; but we cannot estimate the public services of great men without some indulgence in them. It is impossible to look at the history of Eu-

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\* Passages cited in Alison's Life, i. 88, 89.



rope for the year from 1815 downwards, without thinking of what it might have been had the battle of Waterloo been the reverse of what it was ; and we cannot estimate Marlborough's services to Britain without a consideration of what the empire would have been without the Union of 1707. His sagacity saw at once the historical conditions that must madden the Scots against their neighbours if both continued separate nations under one sovereign. That sovereign would live in the stronger nation : his advisers would be there ; and when their advice was offensive to the nation poor and distant, they would tell him to use the power of the greater nation to bring the other to reason. With the heir of the house of Stewart at the Court of France, where his title was solemnly acknowledged—with Scotland outraged and hostile after the affair of Darien—with a declaration by Scotland that no occupant of the throne of England should rule her while her wrongs were unredressed—with an army gathered on each side of the Border,—nothing almost can be more certainly predicted as the effect of sufficient causes than that Louis XIV. would have defeated the project of Union had his hands not been full of desperate work at home. How vital the crisis was, and how narrow the escape, is shown in the simple fact, that when a turn in the war in Spain released a part of the French force in the year after the Union, it was sent on an expedition to Scotland—a hopeless expedition, since, under the good star of the fortunes of the British empire, it was a few months too late for mischief that might have been irretrievable.

While we see in the career of Louis XIV. a signal instance of what a monarch could do in handling the destinies of a nation, we

see in the Britain of Queen Anne's reign how strong and firm the institutions were, and how independent of personal influence. Queen Anne's reign was signally eventful throughout ; it was eventful in the Court, in the senate, and in the field. And yet the sovereign who seemed to direct all was a stupid woman. It happened also that she was an obstinate woman. She was flighty and capricious, and when her caprice got into a groove, she held on to it with a stubbornness that had a strong likeness to firmness. The effects of these two qualities can scarcely be said to have been calamitous, but they were remarkable. They set at work the powers of signally able and ambitious men ; but with all their ability and ambition these men had not power enough to disturb the constitution of the country. If a change of favour among waiting-maids produced a revolution in the country, it was but in the form of substituting one able set of servants of the Crown for another. There was nothing dear to the constitution either usurped or lost in the topsy-turvy. Her defects had a curious capacity for opening into brilliant and beneficent results. She was a bigot ; but her bigotry attached itself to an unbigoed religion, which did not furnish her with the means of doing mischief by persecution or intolerance. Her bigotry, indeed, to the Church of England, was the salvation of the Parliamentary and Protestant settlement. She dearly loved legitimacy. She had a natural affection for the brother who was driven forth ; but when the temptation to act on these amiable feelings came upon her, the Church of England stepped between them and a counter-revolution.

There was surely a signal wealth of gifted minds at hand, when the caprices of a Court, influenced as they

were by paltry and degrading incidents, called up on either hand two such potent spirits as Marlborough and Bolingbroke. The name of Marlborough's kinsman, Sidney Godolphin, does not fill the ear of fame so full as these ; but he was a very great statesman. His strength lay in domestic affairs—internal government—and there he took his post. His portrait by Houbraken is not attractive, and does not justly render his character. It has a certain air of stupid corporate pomposity, heightened by the presence of the treasurer's staff of office held in solemn ceremonial. His statesmanship reached the elevation of real genius. The union with Scotland may justly be celebrated as his achievement ; for no one, on his side of the Tweed at least, did so much to forecast its character and press it forward to completeness. While his kinsman kept guard outside, he carried through the business within rapidly and effectively. It seemed a question between them how rapidly the one could get through his momentous work, and how long the other could hold out and guard him from molestation. The Commissioners assembled in the old Cockpit were set to work that eminently required to be conducted in peace and serenity. The nicest calculations of money matters, and their incidence on the two nations, and on the separate interests in either, were too apt to be toned by prejudices and national animosities, and it was critically necessary to exclude all further exciting influences.

There was wonderful adroitness in the pecuniary adjustment of extremely complicated international claims. England was a rich country with a heavy debt—Scotland was poor, but comparatively unencumbered. Could Scotland be fairly asked to bear a share in the other's burden? No ; it was otherwise

arranged. The debt had been increased in wars to protect the commerce of England, and the colonial interests, whence Scotland was sedulously excluded. For the future Scotland must take her share in the taxation for these purposes ; but in as far as that taxation was for the payment of debt, she should receive compensation in hard cash, and did receive it. Accounts being thus settled down to the year 1707, if Scotland, participating in the trading and colonial privileges, became rich, then she could not complain if she came to be taxed in proportion to her riches.

The payment of the difference at issue in hard cash, instead of leaving it to the future adjustments of the partnership, made a separate capital for poor Scotland to begin with, and had a mighty influence in averting prejudices against the treaty. It was, perhaps, open to the reflection that it brought a sordid pecuniary temptation home to Scotsmen ; but there are fair and unfair pecuniary temptations, and this was distinctly a fair one.

The general historical character of Godolphin is, that he was a man honest personally, and free from all suspicion either of appropriating the public money to his own uses, or of even selfishly seeking his own interest within the licence allowed by the political morality of the day. But it is said that he was audacious in the application of public money for the corruption of others. This character was long strengthened against him by a circumstantial story how he bribed Scots statesmen by distinct sums of money paid for their votes and influence in carrying the Union. Perhaps the most extraordinary feature in the history of this charge is that, in the blind fury of some patriotic Scots against the Union, they should have implicitly believed in this base charge



against their own countrymen. There was a grotesque minuteness in the items of the account, that, instead of stirring suspicion, was appealed to as aggravating the baseness of the transaction. The sum total was £20,540, 7s. 7d. Three of the traitors drew each £1000 or more, the highest being precisely £1104, 15s. 7d. The lowest bribe, £11, 2s., was drawn by a northern peer of illustrious descent.

Few drafts on the national expenditure of England at that period have been more distinctly accounted for than this, because the items of it were examined in the relentless investigations of those who sought to make out a case of peculation against Walpole, and to accomplish this, there had to be a full audit of the public accounts throughout a long period. The money had been lent by the Government of England to the Government of Scotland, and repaid. The Exchequer of Scotland was much attenuated—virtually bankrupt. There were arrears of salary to officers of the Crown, military and civil, with other public debts. The wise English statesman thought that, for the matter of risking some £20,000, it was to be regretted that needy or greedy creditors should be howling round the Government of Scotland during the delicate discussions attending the Union. There was a curious subtlety in the transaction, for it had an innate tendency to recoup itself. It was a foregone conclusion that if the Union were carried England would be due some matter of £300,000 to Scotland, and the paltry advance would be deducted when this debt was paid.

It would be easy to follow up the three great names that have passed before us with a procession of others that would have been eminent as statesmen in a less fertile Court. We confess to a weakness

in favour of one of those, who has secured a comparatively small share of public favour—Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford. He was doomed to a certain unpopular stigma as the cousin of Abigail Hill, who superseded the Duchess of Marlborough, and of the whole race of little Hills held in much despite, including him of the halfpence immortalised in the derisive wrath of Swift. On the other side, he gained a good deal when he was stabbed by Guiscard; and as he had the actual wound, and went to bed, the world held him entitled to all the credit of the affair, though it was maintained that the crazy Frenchman intended to stab Bolingbroke, as a far more formidable antagonist of French interests. But, in truth, it is not as a statesman that Harley commends himself to our liking: it is for his princely patronage of literature and art—a service of infinite merit in that age when it was undertaken by a man of rank and wealth, gifted with a discriminating spirit. All the world knows the value of his collection of manuscripts. He took his part in studies but imperfectly followed in that age—studies connected with early British archaeology and the progress of the constitution. Then there were some touches of simplicity about him that one cannot but like, for all the evil attributed to him as a statesman. Among the men of letters and art who haunted him, were many who looked more to the possible rewards of intellectual achievements than to the pleasure of accomplishing them. Perhaps, poor fellows, when we look at Hogarth's distressed poet, we may pardon them, and give them even a little sympathy. But Harley's treatment of these men was a standing jest, because he did not see, or pretended not to see, what they were after, and dealt with them as if nothing had any interest on either

side save some matter of literature or art. The case of Prior the poet was often spoken of as peculiarly cruel, though, at the same time, it caused more laughter than compassion. It was said that mysterious hints had been uttered by the statesman as to its being desirable that he should study the Spanish language; and that when he reported his studies as completed, the reward was—not an embassy to the Court of Spain, but a request for an interchange of opinions as to the style of Cervantes.

The names of Bolingbroke and Oxford pass us on from the soldiers and statesmen to the authors of the period. We are still on illustrious ground. There are some who can only look on Queen Anne's reign as the era of great victories, while others think of it only as the age of a great literature. "The wits of Queen Anne's reign" are a separate constellation—like the magnates of the Augustan age in Rome—only in their habit, as they lived much more distinct. In the literary annals of the period they are continually coming and going before us, or abiding in presence and making themselves personally known. They were so many, so free-spoken, and so concentrated in London, that their own talk and writings supply us in abundance with what the world ever hunts out with greedy curiosity—the personal nature and habits of men of genius. We have nothing else like the social interior thus opened to us in any other country, or in any other period of our own history. We may easily believe that Pericles had a

group of lively, witty, accomplished people about him; but what do we know of them, or of himself either, in his convivialities as a private gentleman? There was much wit and eloquence scattered about within and around Cicero's Tusculum—more still, perhaps, among those who lolled round the board of Mæcenas and slowly sipped his Falernian; but all their wit and wisdom is as ill preserved for us as the heroism of the ante-Agamemnonites. Pass we from these periods of old renown to the literary group that has most loudly and steadily of all proclaimed its sayings and doings to the world—that of the Frenchmen who are called the Encyclopædists, whether they all wrote articles in that huge, unwieldy, forgotten mass the *Encyclopédie* or not. Among them are D'Alembert, Diderot, Grimm, D'Holbach, Marmontel, Helvétius; and there are the honourable women—Defiant, L'Espinasse, Geoffrin, Boccage, and Boufflers. The last was the mistress of the Prince of Conti, and must not be confounded with that other contemporary Boufflers, who did duty as mistress to Stanislaus Augustus of Poland. That they were a group full of genius and accomplishments, and worthy of all interest, is not to be questioned. It is to be regretted that we have so little about them in English literature. Only a clumsy translation of the letters of Grimm and Diderot, some pleasant notices by Miss Berry, and a little unknown book written by an eminent Edinburgh lawyer, called 'Literature, and its Effects on Society.'\* But there is throughout a deficiency in easy, natural, careless

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\* Are there any people now alive who remember the late Robert Thomson, advocate, Sheriff of Caithness, and the author of an esteemed practical law-book on Bills of Exchange? He was in his day sufficiently noticed and noticeable, from the peculiarities that made a temporary wit utter the saying, that Thomson was both in outward person and in inward character somewhat beyond the perpendicular. It happens to be known to the author of this paper that he was the author of the little book here referred to, and a very readable book it is.



wit uttered for its own sake, and a prevalence of artificiality and parade. Every feat of intellect seems to be performed that it may be brought into the market and sold for two prices—the one paid in public fame, the other in the smiles and solid patronage of some potentate. The flowers are in the hot air of a conservatory, or are potted and carried into some *salon*, where their scents are mixed with the fumes of pomatum and cosmetics. It was in fact a great mart of wit and literature, where “the barbarian Courts” brought these articles for importation. We have the collection of letters—of literary state papers, as they might be called—by Grimm and Diderot to the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, the renowned “*Mémoires historiques, littéraires, et anecdotiques.*” They are no doubt pleasant, and excessively amusing; but a good deal of contempt goes to season admiration, and it is followed by some sense of the heartlessness and profligacy of the whole set. The barbarian Courts, as we know, imported not only the wit in the passive sense as expressive of what was uttered, but also the wit in the active sense of the accomplished utterer of it. We know too well what Courts, barbarian and other, had to undergo from the principles so nourished, since every institution in the world was shaken by them. It becomes difficult to indulge in their guilty mirth without remembering the Temple and the guillotine.

And yet, when we turn from this brilliant throng to many respectable periods—respectable for intellect as well as other merits—in British history, we feel a coldness and solitude, as one who goes home from a gay assemblage or theatre across a bleak moor in the grey morning hours. Isolation is the characteristic of most of our literary periods, making the one we are here dealing

with exceptional. Attempts, indeed, to group together literary pictures from the lives of our authors, have proved in some instances to be failures of a signal kind, with a sort of picturesqueness in their deficiencies. The two volumes quarto of Godwin's *Life of Chaucer* were dignified, and became renowned, by Walter Scott's exposure of their nothingness as concerned the principal person in the grouping. As the author boasted about his successful researches into the personal life of the old poet, so little known before he took it up, the illustrious critic thus estimated the justness of the boast: “The researches into the records have only produced one or two writs addressed to Chaucer while Clerk of the Works; the several grants and passports granted to him by Edward III. and Richard II., which had been referred to by former biographers, together with the poet's evidence in a court of chivalry, a contract about a house, and a solitary receipt for half-a-year's salary. These, with a few documents referring to John of Gaunt, make the Appendix to the book, and are the only original materials brought to light by the labour of the author. Our readers must be curious to know how, out of such slender materials, Mr Godwin has contrived to rear such an immense fabric? For this purpose he has had recourse to two fruitful expedients. In the first place, when the name of a town, of a person, or of a science, happens to occur in his narrative, he stops short to give the history of the city *ab urbe condita*; the life of the man from his cradle upwards, with a brief account of his ancestors; or a full essay upon the laws and principles of the science, with a sketch of the lives of its most eminent professors.”

It is unaccountable how, with this example before him, Charles

Knight should have played us the same trick in his 'Shakespeare—a Biography.' To be sure it is an infinitely more brilliant and readable book than the quartos of the great philosopher; but a very small percentage of its interest is spent on Shakespeare. We have not, it is true, the biography of everybody else, and the history of sciences from the Creation. We have a lively sketch of English life, manners, and amusements, in the days of Queen Elizabeth and her successor; but it has no more to do with the life of Shakespeare, than, as he must have been at school, to let us see about the system of rudimental education in that day; and since it is probable that he may have sometimes danced round a May-pole, let us see about that too. No; unfortunately for us, nothing has been done to bring Shakespeare down from his serene elevation above all that was contemporary with him, and show us in his manner as he lived—to bring him forward as a man of this world.

And are we better off when we come to Milton? Is it not still with him and his life, as Wordsworth said,

"Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart"?

With all the learning and research and eloquence at the command of the biographer now dealing with this chapter of literary history, he has not been able to make Milton the centre of an intellectual group, or even a distinct item in such a corporation. He has not, it is true, followed the discursive method adopted with Chaucer and Shakespeare. But to reconcile us, as it were, to an account of Milton, he has given us a history of the times into the bargain. A good and full history it is; but in its goodness and fulness it only excites regret that Professor Masson

did not avowedly write a History of the Reign of Charles I. and the Protectorate, giving Milton and his literature their proper place in such a book. This method of pursuing two separate classes of literary exposition differing in their proportions, reminds us of that occasional separation of the stages of an event into two or more pictures on one canvas—a practice to which even Raphael's Transfiguration hardly reconciles the eye.

Let us not open up great inquiries as to the summit-level reached by the highest intellects at one time or another. We are not going to solve subtle questions about the influence that the greatest intellects have left for after-ages, and the lustre they have conferred each on the age when he appeared. Leaving unsettled the question whether one genius commanding all ages is worth more or less than a group of clever people enjoying their own cleverness among themselves, and sending it forth among others, there is surely no period in the annals of England when literature was so brilliant as the age that hands down to us the names of Pope, Addison, Swift, Steele, Arbuthnot, Garth, Prior, and Defoe.

If none of these soar into the altitudes that enjoy the worship, and seem necessary for obtaining the tolerance, of some minds, yet to the less exalted there is abundant material for admiration and enjoyment. If we have not the worship of some great intellect apart from our own sphere, yet because of the approach made by all the group to a common level, we have the rattle of the repartee, and the flash and report of the occasional epigram or rhetorical climax. So affluent, indeed, is this age in intellectual growth, that besides the goodly list that already fills the cars of fame, it would probably be the



best period in which those resurrectionists who dig for and recover buried celebrities could invest their labour. Who speaks now of Tom Brown? If any one does, he will be supposed to refer not to a real man of Queen Anne's day, but a fictitious man of Queen Victoria's. Yet there was such a person, a real power in his day, issuing a brilliant literature in countless editions. Very little is known of him personally. He was called "Tom Brown of Oxford," so that he perhaps distinguished himself there. His writings are full of classicalities; but he scatters them about with a scornful carelessness, as if in the sort of familiarity that has a proverbial offspring. One of the favourite objects, indeed, of his acrid sarcasm, is the Christian who cannot accept an idea as worth anything unless it can be shown to have been previously expressed in the thought of some heathen in Greece or Italy. "Nothing," he says, "will please some men but books stuffed with antiquity, groaning with the weight of learned quotations drawn from the fountains—and what is all this but pilfering? But I will neither rob the ancient nor modern books, but pillage all I give you from the book of the world. The book of the world is very ancient, and yet always new."\*

There is ample room for comparing his genius with that of Swift; and in such a competition judgment would not invariably go with the greater reputation. Swift had a fine stage for the display of his mighty gifts. He had lived in his youth with a courtier, and a great monarch had taught him how to rear asparagus in the Dutch way. He knew intimately the first men of his day. Then he was an actual Dean. True, he said to the states-

men who did not make him a bishop, "God confound you for a couple of scoundrels;" but to be a Dean was to be placed high above assaults and suspicions. Nor did it in any way detract from his position that he had sometimes no congregation but his "Dearly-beloved Roger." That he was above the sordid work of priests and curates enhanced his claim to belong to the class of the rich and great. Both these wits dealt in the morbid moral anatomy of London; but here Brown was the more incisive and complete of the two. He evidently formed an item in groups of such a cast that neither a Cato nor a Very Reverend would dare to let vestiges be seen that he had approached them. Both dealt a little too much in the indecorous; but their method was different. Swift, taking his stand as a clean man, displays in all its distinctness the moral nuisance. He rubs the world's nose in it. Brown, on the other hand, by some subtle trope or classical allusion, points to some hidden horror. Without some pre-knowledge that such things can be, we might pass by his allusion as meaningless, and possibly stupid. In this, and in many other points, he has more analogy with Hogarth than with any author. Both had the subtle power of telling by a hint. The three tell-tale faces in the funeral scene in one of the Progresses, and the evidence of Felix trembling, are very like some of Brown's allusions. Both, too, despised antiquity and precedent as an infallible guide. Brown graced his epigrammatic sentences by making sport of the classics; but the painter had not the fortune to possess so apt a medium, and his ridicule of the great masters only made himself ridiculous. Both brought out

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\* Preface to *Amusements, Serious and Comical*, calculated for the Meridian of London.

to light the inner life of the social conditions of the day. It is to be regretted that we know little personally of Brown—not even how he lived. It is open to us to suppose that the popularity of his books supplied him with daily bread. He is bitter in his ridicule of dedications by the parasites of the day. It may be remembered how Byron said in laughing scorn that he had tried to give a bribe to his “Grandmother’s Review,” the ‘British.’ “I sent it in a letter to the editor, who thanked me duly by return of post.” Brown almost anticipates this trick by a story of a long fulsome dedication, and long waiting in the ante-room, with no result.

Shall we count Isaac Watts, with his “Little busy bee,” among the choice celebrities of Queen Anne’s reign? If any one doubts the right of the hymnist to this eminence, let him go to Southampton; let him there, in the presence of any body of men native to the place, express anything approaching towards a doubt that Isaac Watts was the mightiest bard that ever wielded the English language,—he will meet such a rebuff as will awaken him to some new ideas on the sublime and beautiful. But, great poet or not, Watts has exercised a mighty influence on the British mind. It was not in what he deemed his strength that it was exercised. His “Logic,” put forth with all the

pomp of a standard in philosophy, has no more in common with logic as a science than with acoustics or hydrostatics; and though not entitled to speak from a critical perusal, we may believe that his other ponderous treatises, making up the six volumes of his collected works that introduce us to the one volume of his poetry, are of a like character.

But his sacred poetry, still popular in the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland and among the English Dissenters, may be said to have got absolute possession of the nursery; and this is a strong post to hold by one who would invade and mould the adult intellect. But they are mistaken who suppose that there is not a dash of fine poetry here and there in his multitudinous rhymes. That the jingle of rhyme and dancing measure carried them off into puerilities, was what really made his juvenile hymnology available for giving a fund of enjoyment to the drudgery of the task-book, and helped to make children know the nature of poetry, and to infuse into their minds some pure and solemn thoughts. And however much we may feel inclined to count that the children’s poet was in himself somewhat childish, we cannot but admit the greatness of his influence.\*

Perhaps it would be still more difficult to find a legitimate place in the group for him who became

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\* Perhaps the reader may possibly remember the traditional story of the hopeful shape in which the youthful Watts renounced rhyme, when under dorsal discipline administered by the paternal hand :—

“ Oh, father, do some pity take,  
And I will no more verses make.”

It is in the recollection of the present writer, how, at a well-remembered symposium long ago, bringing together a group of young men, the survivors of which are now old men, there was a trial of wits in expressing the sentiment of the young Watts in other forms of rhyming jingle. Some of the efforts were ludicrously doggerel, others ludicrously heroic. The only one now remembered—probably because it was the best—was hit off by Theodore Martin, who has since gained high repute in lyrical composition and classic learning. Here it is :—

“ Oh do not strike me, reverend sire,  
And I no more shall strike the lyre.”



known as "Orator Henley." His fame, or notoriety, as some would prefer to call it, belongs to a later period; but his most ambitious effort of genius, 'Esther, Queen of Persia: an Historical Poem,' now on the table before us, bears date in 1714; and his project of a Universal Grammar was published a year or so earlier. Whether we may justly call him a great man or not, it is certain that he would hold a higher place in the present day, were he among us, than he held in his own; and those who are on the look-out for unpopular characters suitable for dedication, might perhaps find a suitable hero in the Reverend John Henley. He was a Dissenting preacher; and that was nearly as fatal a definition in his day as that of "Farmer-General" became in the days of Voltaire. But he was a Dissenting preacher of a peculiarly odious stamp. He was a man of good old family. He got a university education, and dropped into a comfortable family living. But he would not be content with his lot, so he turned a Dissenter and popular preacher in London. There was something in all this so loathsome as only to be paralleled when high-born Lady Serena disappears with Plush, and gets married by the Registrar.

The name of "Orator" naturally occurred as a scornful designation for the popular preacher because he called his church the "Oratory." It was a large building, absorbing vast crowds out of the miscellaneous population of London. In this it was the prototype of a certain Tabernacle of the present day. Whether the existing Tabernacular, who has a great fame as an orator, be

also a scholar, is not known; and it is not unfair to say that probabilities are against the supposition. But Henley certainly was a scholar of wide range. He fought a controversial battle with Bowyer, the French lexicographer, about the fundamentals of French grammar. In his project of a Universal Grammar, he threw himself fearlessly into oriental languages; and though many have denounced his pulpit oratory, none have proclaimed his ignorance of the languages he thus professed to wield.

His most remarkable literary achievement is, however, the Liturgy prepared by him for the congregation of the Oratory.\* It will be found reprinted in Hall's 'Fragmenta Liturgica;' and it will perhaps surprise those who are familiar with the qualities of a popular Dissenting preacher of the present day, to find him sedulously searching through the Fathers and all the vestiges of early ecclesiastical literature for the devotional forms of the primitive Church.

One of the wild and offensive projects attributed to Henley was the establishment of a university in London. As it was profanity to listen to such a suggestion, he thought him to create something like a centre of the higher education within his own Oratory. Surely he expressed himself in something higher than the tone of a clerical demagogue when he set down among his objects in this project, "To give by just degrees a standard to the English tongue; to clear, regulate, and digest the English history; to revive an ancient Athenian and Roman school of philosophy, rhetoric, and elocution, which

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\* The Primitive Liturgy and Eucharist, according to the institution of Christ and His Apostles, for the use of the Oratory: with Two Homilies, or Theological Lectures, on the Liturgy and Eucharist; and a new Preface explaining the discretionary use of the oldest Creeds and Doxologies, or *Gloria Patri*, of the Two First Ages.

last is reckoned among the *artes perditæ*."

"Our noble language," he says, "like our arms, ought to bear the laurel from France, which it merits, as well as from ancient Greece and Rome, in delicacy, in force, in majesty, in beauty."

There is no doubt that he carried hilarity, or, if you like, buffoonery, into the pulpit—and he vindicated the practice thus: "A preacher is bound in conscience sometimes to preach burlesque; for he is bound to be all things to all men. Some men will not be engaged by any method but burlesque; therefore I plead liberty of conscience, and demand it to preach burlesque when I think proper, as the clergy do to those that require that manner. Mirth is part of religion. 'The fear of God,' says Ben Sirac, 'makes a merry heart; her ways are pleasantness; rejoice in the Lord. Be perfect as God is perfect.' And God is said to mock, to have in derision, to laugh sinners to scorn."\*

Henley had, in fact—and it was the cause of his offensive popularity—a touch of that fatality that in Swift, Sydney Smith, and less emphatically in our late neighbour Dr Guthrie, could not resist the temptation to yield to the impulse of the ludicrous on the occasions when the ludicrous was also the unbecoming. It was among the cleverest ideas of Brougham, in reference to the possibility of making Sydney Smith a bishop, that he would be like the cat turned into a lady, who kept all feminine propriety till she saw a mouse, when nature triumphed, and she dashed at it, upsetting the china. Sydney would preserve all decorum until some tremendous joke took possession of him, and then would come an explosion that would upset the Bench of Bishops.

It was a practice with Henley, as it often is with very earnest preachers, and other promulgators of doctrine, to waylay people, so as to bring them within the influence of his eloquence. If he could but get them to hear, their hearts might be turned. On one celebrated occasion he laid a trap for the shoemakers. All London was placarded with an announcement that from the pulpit he would show how a pair of shoes could be made in five minutes. Throughout his arousing address the artisans present were impatient for the practical exhibition. He kept his word to them by producing a pair of boots and cutting them down into available shoes.

Among those calamities incident to our pure human race that give a zest to history, we must include the quarrels, hatreds, follies, and cruelties incident to religious fanaticism. We had these pouring in upon the land in quick and dire succession, from the fires of Smithfield to the cruelties against the Covenanters, and the bloody vengeance wrought in the murder of Sharp. In Queen Anne's reign this feature in British history calms down. There was the affair of Sacheverell, to be sure, making a mighty splutter; but it was to the bloody deeds of previous reigns as a street row to a battle, or a bloody nose to a murder. Bishop Burnet estimated it neatly enough when he said: "The Whigs took it in their heads to roast a parson, and they did roast him; but their zeal tempted them to make the fire so high that they scorched themselves."

And yet the age was not without its fiery trials; but they were seen, not felt. As the tide of war rolled far off from our peaceful shores, so did the ferocities and agonies of persecution touch us only in rumours as to a strange people in a dis-

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\* Milk for Babes, &c. By J. Henley, M.A.



tant land. Of the rabid religious ferocity of Louis XIV. in his dotage, when he was under the influence of his sainted wife, we felt nothing save in the blessed task of affording succour and refuge to the oppressed, who repaid the debt by bringing a new and valuable industrial element into our population.

In so far as the picturesqueness of fanaticism is attractive, these poor martyrs from the Cevennes and Languedoc made themselves eminently attractive to the mob of London, where they settled down at large, forming the colony of Spitalfields. They ranted profusely, and made converts of many English people, chiefly of the devouter sex. These ranted also; and as if to meet on common ground in their ravings, both French and English fanatics dealt in unknown tongues. Miracles, too, were performed in abundance. One was attended by incidents rather conspicuous and troublesome. It was announced that the French prophets, as they were termed, were to raise a dead body in St Paul's Churchyard. A vast mob assembled to behold the phenomenon, but it was a failure; not one of the dead lying there would consent to rise. The failure was attributed to the fact of some unfaithful person looking on; and it is certainly a clear enough proposition, that in a mob of some sixty thousand of the refuse of London, there would be a considerable sprinkling of unfaithfulness in various shapes.

There is a rather happy supplement to this story, which we would like to see examined and traced home. The shape in which we have come across it somewhere is this: Some persons were prosecuted on this occasion for a nuisance in gathering a mob and blocking up a thoroughfare. Among these was a certain Sir John Bulkely, who was a great sympathiser in the cause of

the French prophets. He waited on Sir John Holt, the Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, and intimated that the Lord had appeared in a vision to him—Bulkely—and told him to go to the Chief Justice and direct him to order a *nolle prosequi* in the proceedings. Holt is said to have answered gravely that he did not think it could have been the Lord who had given such instruction, since it showed gross ignorance of English law in sending him to the wrong officer—the Attorney-General being the only person who could order a *nolle prosequi*.

In these days England prospered apace, and was growing marvellously rich. It was the sight of this prosperity rousing up envious Scotland into hostility and rivalry that rendered that disagreeable affair, the Union, an absolute necessity. Scotland said she must in some way have participation in the trading and shipping privileges, or find the like for herself. The great moneyed and trading powers of England pronounced that she should have neither. By the navigation laws, Scotland was as absolutely foreign as all the rest of the world; and all efforts at any arrangement, either by a union or otherwise, to bring Scotland within the navigation laws and the privileges of colonial trade, were sternly repelled. The efforts of Scotland to create such a system for herself were crushed in the affair of Darien. There was more apology for such harsh dealing, than, with the opinions current at the present day, we can readily realise. It was a devout belief that all national profit must be realised by a loss somewhere, and if Scotland prospered it would be by the ruin of England. Were those prosperous gentlemen who had invested in the great chartered companies to vote away their children's bread? But there was a worse alternative in sight.

Scotland might go back to her ancient alliance with France, and find as of old a steady and powerful protector. It would be these two who would open the new trade in the British waters; and apart from all questions about danger of invasion, a thing to be scorned of England,—if it were a serious matter that the half-million or so of people in Scotland were to be enriched at their expense, how much more awful was the dispensation if it brought in the twelve or fourteen millions of France in addition!

So the Union was forced on by an irresistible pressure, guided by able managers; and when it came to pass, the expected calamities did not follow it. On the contrary, whether Scotland became richer or not, the progress of England in prosperity seemed to take a special impulse. Then, although it was some little humiliation to the proud Englishman to find that by Act of Parliament he belonged to "that part of Great Britain called England," he found that there was bound over to keep the peace towards him a certain discreditable poor relation—one who went about swaggering in arms too, and might any day commit violence on his worshipful, comfortable, and wealthy kinsman. Many towns in England, and especially London, carry a permanent testimony of the wealth of Queen Anne's day. In the streets about Westminster we see domestic architecture brought to the stage where it has remained with little change down to the present day. We have the flat rows of houses with the front wall-plate instead of the gable to the street; the dining-room flat on a level with it, so that jolly toppers could pass out and in with the minimum of risk and difficulty; the drawing-room flat above; and below, the area or basement story, in its quadrilateral pit,—all extremely an-

tagonistic to the æsthetic, but withal comfortable.

The English working man had an ample share in the prosperity that was going. He became the envy of his brethren all over Europe. France was a terrible antithesis of splendour and squalor. The great Louis had made the fens and dirty ditches of Versaillesin to a Garden of Eden, and built on its palaces that might realise the dreams of a new Jerusalem. But there was intense penury even in Paris; the provinces were swept by famine, and often the peasant's cottage was found to contain nothing but the skeletons of those who had lived and worked in it, fighting with starvation until they fell in the struggle. The German peasant had often a hard struggle for a sufficiency of his black bread. The Dutchman, rather better off, was living very parsimoniously, and even saving a trifle to be laid aside for a rainy day.

In England the workman's use of his good fortune produced some of the unpleasant features that have reappeared at the present day. Not trained to husband the money passing into his hands, or to resist the stimulus to sensual indulgence, he cast away the fruit of his industry in luxurious living. If he had as much of this as he cared for, he cut away a portion of his work-day and spent it in idleness. In harder times, when the day's work barely supplied the day's necessities, he was renowned for his gallant contest with difficulties, and working more than any other workman, fed himself better, and kept up his strength for the contest. But now that he had all that he desired, and more, why should he work? The capitalist appealed to him in vain; the temptation that could stimulate him to the additional work had disappeared with the prosperity that made the capital of the employer. The one



was bent on increasing his hands—the other had no nucleus for accumulation. It was not his nature to begin such a process; and so “the British workman” became notorious for leading a life of idle luxury, and ending his days a pauper in the parish workhouse.

Still these were but the reactionary evils of prosperity and abundance. The land at large was amply blessed. It enjoyed this material wealth along with those glories of a victorious career that sometimes sufficed the gaunt enthusiast on the other side of the Channel when his vegetable meal was at its most attenuated level. The wars and desolation that must attend a victorious career were all far away from the happy homes of England. There was peace over the land as the companion of plenty. It was an age adorned with intellectual glory—surely Britain was a happy land. Yet within this stately edifice of prosperity there stalked the household skeleton. He did not much trouble the workman. It may be said that he was scarcely seen by the country at large. But statesmen were all too familiar with him—he haunted them every day, troubling them with fears and perplexities.

It was generally believed throughout the English populace that “the Pretender” was the son of the wife of a vagabond physician, who was secreted in the palace, so that her babe, when born, was brought in a warming-pan to the queen’s bed by a nurse generally called Goody Wilks. Hence, when any great occasion called forth a demonstration of anti-Jacobite feeling by the mob of London, their enthusiasm was appropriately expressed by clanging discordant music upon tin warming-pans. Statesmen had, however, abandoned all the childish stories that delighted the populace. They believed too surely that on the other

side of the water there was growing up to manhood the youth who—if immediate hereditary descent were what the Jesuits called it, a divine law, the footsteps of which could be followed with the precision of an exact science—was the heir to his father, and at his death the King of Britain. If either of the daughters of King James and Anne Hyde had left a son or a daughter, many who were driven to other conclusions would have come to a tacit understanding to forget the nearer claim—as on a later occasion, when the last grandson of King James died, people who had professed Jacobitism would not look towards the Sardinian family and the other descendants of Charles I. through his daughter the Duchess of Orleans, but obstinately held to the sort of fiction of law, that George III. was the next in the pure line of succession. In earlier times it was much easier than it had become in the reign of King George to hide such disagreeable conditions out of sight. Genealogies were cooked by adepts to accomplish such things; and if there were other adepts who knew the truth, and could contradict them, the task was not a safe one. The two sisters were each in the right line, and were received by the common people as the only legitimate representatives of that line. King William might, for the services he had done, hold the throne provisionally; and he too was in the line as a descendant of Charles I. But just as Queen Anne was mounting the throne, a gloom was cast over the land by an event of bitter sadness—the death of her son and only surviving child, the Duke of Gloucester. How it shook the land we can easily believe, when we remember the crisis of the winter before last. The country was told how it was caused by the fatiguing ceremonials of his birthday as Prince of Wales.

"After the ceremony was over, the Duke found himself fatigued and indisposed, and the next day he was very sick, and complained of his throat. The third day he was hot and feverish. Next morning, after bleeding, he thought himself better; but in the evening his fever appearing more violent, a blister was applied to him, and other proper remedies administered. The same day a rash appeared on his skin, which increasing next day, more blisters were laid on. In the afternoon the fever growing stronger, his Highness fell into a delirium, which continued till his death. He passed the night as he did the preceding, in short broken sleeps and incoherent talk. On the 29th, the blisters having taken effect, and the pulse mending, the physicians who attended him thought it probable that he might recover; but about eleven at night he was on a sudden seized with a difficult breathing, and could swallow nothing, so that he expired before midnight, being ten years and five days old;"\* and so, as might some ragged urchin who had caught a cold through the neglect of his drunken parents, dropped away one on whom hung the fate of a mighty empire.

"Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas  
Regumque turres."

It is in the same solemn reverence to the power of the grim leveller that our English poet sang of a later palace calamity—

"Hark! forth from the abyss a voice  
proceeds,  
A long low distant murmur of dread  
sound,  
Such as arises when a nation bleeds  
With some deep and immedicable  
wound.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where  
art thou?  
Fond hope of many nations—art  
thou dead?

Could not the grave forget thee, and  
lay low  
Some less majestic, less beloved  
head?"

On Kneller's canvas the young prince is a handsome intelligent boy, with the better part of the Stewart lineaments—like his cousin over the water, with some intellect, fire, and strength injected into him. He was like all princes whose death might have averted critical conditions—like his granduncle, Henry Prince of Wales, and the Dauphin, son of Louis XV.—a miracle of virtue and intelligence. Burnet, who was his tutor, says: "I had read over the Psalms, Proverbs, and Gospels with him, and had explained things that came in my way very copiously; and was often surprised with the questions that he put to me, and the reflections that he made. He came to understand things relating to religion beyond imagination. I went through geography with him. I explained to him the forms of government in every country, and the interests and trade of that country, and what was both good and bad in it. I acquainted him with all the great revolutions that had been in the world, and gave him a copious account of the Greek and Roman histories, and of Plutarch's Lives. The last thing I explained to him was the Gothic constitution, and the beneficiary and feudal laws. I talked of these things at different times, nearly three hours a-day; this was both easy and delightful to him. The King ordered five of his chief Ministers to come once a-quarter and examine the progress he made; they seemed amazed both at his knowledge and the good understanding that appeared in him. He had a wonderful memory and a very good judgment."

It is possible that some who

\* Custe, i. 409.



cast their eye on this page may have had but an indistinct impression of William, Prince of Wales and Duke of Gloucester, who died in Queen Anne's reign. It is a significant fact, indeed, that it should have made so small a mark on history, and have passed away among its mere shadows, in the business of providing an immediate remedy for the loss, by going back to the Protestant descendants of the Princess Elizabeth, the unfortunate Queen of Bohemia, and out of the group of these descendants arriving by genealogical analysis at the Princess Sophia.

But statesmen must have felt how critical the conditions had become. It was the climax of many disappointments. The children born to Queen Anne were so many that authorities differ about their number—some saying seventeen, others nineteen. Of each one that lived for however short a time the death must have been felt as a separate shake to the Revolution settlement. The whole suggested strange superstitions and gloomy ideas among such of the common people as were inclined to Jacobitism. The repeated losses were judgments against Queen Anne for her undutiful and impious conduct to her father.\* When the last blow came it was a signal of the Almighty's wrath, and plainly announced his decree that the impious projects for dis-

carding the line of kings set by Him to reign as His vicegerents on earth were to be crushed and punished. Yet still the new Act of Settlement went calmly through the Houses, as if it had been the settlement of some municipal franchise for the election of common-council men, which, having fallen into confusion, had to be disentangled and settled by an Act of Parliament.

We may find valuable constitutional lessons running through the many shiftings and perils in this great passage of our annals; other nations may learn from them more than we require to seek. We are surely come now to the age when all may be examined dispassionately, and at freedom from the wayward influence of political forces. That the time has but recently come, and that many of our books of the period date from before its arrival, is an additional reason for bestowing special attention on the fourteen years elapsing between the death of King William and the accession of King George. It has to be remembered that after Jacobitism was long dead as a real political force to be dreaded, it had a picturesque and fanciful hold on literature—a hold innocent of all power of practical influence, but sufficient to have a distorting influence on history. It is not many years since Jacobitism got good-humoured toleration enough to create interest in a swaggering Pretender parading the

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\* The gentle reader may be excused if he should be surprised to find this tone of opinion very emphatically announced in this nineteenth century, under the auspices of an eminent philosopher of ultra-Presbyterian tendencies, on the conduct of Queen Anne to her father at the crisis of the Revolution. We are told that "the conduct of the princess may possibly find some palliation from the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed, and from the partiality to the Protestant faith, which from her earliest infancy she had been taught to cherish. But every feeling of the heart rises in indignation against the unnatural deed, and seeks to hide it in that blaze of light which encircles the brilliant events of her reign. If heaven in this world ever interposes its avenging arm between guilt and happiness, may we not consider the loss of seventeen children as the penalty which it exacted from a mother who had broken the heart of the most indulgent father?"—Article "Anne," in 'The Edinburgh Encyclopedia,' conducted by David Brewster, LL.D. ¶

streets in portentous costume as the representative of the Stewarts; who was even permitted to act his preposterous part at the tables of people holding rank in good society.

But it is believed that now the atmosphere is sufficiently cleared for an impartial account of the whole; and a wondrous tale it is to tell, when its difficulties, its dangers, and its momentous results are all followed. Surely it may be said with an assurance of universal assent, that no royal house in Europe is so secure in the indubitable succession as the house of Hanover so worthily represented among us now is. And as surely there can be few things so important for the other nations of Europe to know, as the various steps of progress by which Great Britain, after suffering a succession of unfortunate reigns, found a remedy that set a firm dynasty on the throne. The remedy was not in discarding monarchy, nor in discarding the dynastic system by which the heir pointed out by genealogical conditions succeeds to a throne as he would to an estate. Nor was the remedy discovered in any profound system of political philosophy founded on the maxims of the acknowledged authorities in this kind of work, such as Aristotle, Cicero, Tacitus, or Machiavelli. It was simply passing by the immediate detrimentals, and permitting the current of hereditary succession to run on. If there was philosophy in the remedy, it was merely the philosophy of creating the smallest possible disturbance of the existing system. Since that great constitutional feat was accomplished, what terrible convulsions, with their attendants, ruin and bloodshed, have we beheld in efforts to accomplish national regeneration by revolutions more conformable to abstract theory! How simple

and beautiful a proposition that seemed to be in the French Declaration of Right, that "All men are born equal"! And yet, after all the bloody Procrustean efforts to make it true, the result has been to invert the principle; to find that men are born unequal,—some strong, others weak—some clever, others stupid; and that the great object of constitutions and laws is to see that their inequality is so subject to restraints as to be incapacitated for gross injustice.

The history of the Parliamentary settlement in the house of Hanover is surely valuable for this one reason, if for nothing else, that it proves the possibility of a constitutional settlement. Throughout the rest of European mankind, among French, Germans, Spaniards, all efforts of the kind have been terrible failures; and the most remarkable of modern efforts in the same direction is still on its trial in Italy. Our own settlement, now so old and so firmly rooted, ought surely to be an object of satisfactory reflection to all the friends of constitutional government abroad, since it is the one example that proves such a settlement to be possible. It should carry hope to other nations too, that it was preceded by convulsions, and lived for some time in fear and trembling. If we look from the beginning of the Civil War to the Forty-five as the period of probation, then it exceeded a hundred years; and even France has not yet suffered the convulsive operation of political metamorphosis so long as that. But though the Hanover settlement was twice troubled at later times, it was a firm government at the death of King William; and it is in the reign of Queen Anne that we have the means of studying its healthy youth.

That our age has carried us far beyond the influences of Jacobit-



ism, gives us an opportunity for studying with all the more fairness the exiles on the other side of the water. We can speak of them as of Aristides and Coriolanus, without exciting suspicion of our loyalty. There is much to study in that curious small Court that set itself up in St Germain's, and then had to move further off to Albano at the command of the British Minister, Lord Stair, who would not have it within France itself, nor yet near enough to France to be at the call of the French Government when it desired to trouble or frighten the English. We have some recent literature on the ways and habits of these exiles, written generally in that pensive dreamy tone of literature that befits the subject. They were matter of much interest and inquiry to the late James Deniston of Deniston, the accomplished author of the *History of the Dukes of Urbino*; and there was something in their fate and character that afforded acceptable mental food to his romantic, dreamy, and highly polished intellect. We have a work set apart to the task in a not unlike spirit in a book called '*The Descendants of the Stuarts—*an unchronicled page in England's History,' by William Townend.'

The British Museum has lately acquired many manuscripts from which fuller materials still can be drawn by those whose taste leads them into so tranquil a corner of history. There is particularly the Correspondence of Cardinal Gualtiero, who was the Prince's agent, ambassador, or intercessor at the Vatican. We have here, as if it were matter of important diplomacy and patronage, the inner secrets of the arrangements for keeping alive the Romish Church in Britain, and

especially for providing a supply of those Jesuits who were the fittest hands for the work when it was of a dark, dangerous, and desperate kind. There was a time when to lay these papers open to the public would have been a terrible calamity to many; but they are innocent enough now.

The personal character of the King, Prince, Chevalier, or Pretender, as he was called, according to the various grades from Jacobitism to intense loyalty, makes in itself a curious study; and it becomes important as well as curious when we carry with us, in estimating it, some features in the history of the present day. It cannot be doubted that had he conformed to any reasonable extent, he would have succeeded his sister on the throne. But he was intractable to the most provoking degree in the eyes of his friends—to the most satisfactory extent in those of his opponents. There is an involuntary respect for the honest consistency that rejects the thrones and other lustrous baubles of the earth for conscience' sake; and yet there was a strange twist in his conscience and its source that seemed to detract from all merit in his abstinence. He considered that in the right time the right line would return to its place. It was a thing not to be accomplished by anything that he and others could do,—the Eternal would effect it in the good time He had chosen. Hence the exile was ever serene; nothing disappointed, nothing discouraged him; nor would he give a single word of concession. It is surely among the most interesting studies in our physiology of mental constitutions, that an exact repetition of this phenomenon should come up in this our day.

## THE STORY OF VALENTINE;

## AND HIS BROTHER.

## PART III.—CHAPTER VII.

"RICHARD, there is one disagreeable subject which, as you said nothing about it, I have avoided as long as possible; but I must speak now, before you go."

Lady Eskside had led her son out upon the terrace the evening before he was to leave. She was dressed for dinner in her black satin gown, with a lace cap and stomacher, which even his fastidious eye approved. She had come to the age when little change of costume is possible. Sometimes she wore velvet instead of satin, but that was about all the variety she made, and her lace was her only vanity. She had a crimson Indian scarf thrown over her head and shoulders. Her erect old figure was still as trim, and her step as springy, as any girl's. She was the picture of an old lady, everybody allowed;—and it was true she was old—yet full of an unquenchable youth. She had taken her son by the arm in the interval before dinner, and led him out into the open air to speak to him. Perhaps it was an inopportune moment; but it was a subject for which she felt a few minutes were enough, as it could not but be painful to both.

"Well, mother," he said, with a tone of resignation. He was going next day, which gave him strength to bear this ordeal, whatever its *motif* might be.

"I have said nothing to you—indeed, indeed, I have wished to say nothing—about—— Richard, my dear boy, listen to me with patience—I will not keep you long—about—Val's mother—your wife."

"What about her?" said Richard,

with harsh brevity. He made a movement almost as if to throw off his mother's arm.

"My dear, you must not think this subject is less disagreeable to me than to you. Nothing has been said about her for a long time——"

"And why should anything be said about her?" said Richard. "In such a hopeless business, what is the advantage of discussion? She has chosen her path in life, which is not the same as mine."

His soft and gentle face set into a harsh rigidity: it grew stern, almost severe. "Come indoors, mother—the evening gets cold," he added, after a pause.

"Just a word, Richard—just one word! Do you not see a trace of something different rising in her? She has brought back your boy: I suppose she thinks, poor thing, that it is just she should have one of them——"

"Mother," said Richard, "I am astonished at your charity. You say, poor thing. Do you remember that she has ruined your son's life?"

Lady Eskside made no answer. She looked at him wistfully, with an evident repression of something that rose to her lips.

"She has been my curse," said Richard, vehemently. "For God's sake, if she will leave us alone, let us leave her alone. She has made my life a desert. Is it choice, do you think, that makes me an outcast from my own country? that shuts me out from everything your son and my father's son ought to have been? Why cannot I take my proper place in society—my



natural place? You know well enough what the answer is—her, only her. She has been my ruin: she is the curse of my life.”

He spoke almost with passion, growing not red but white in the intensity of his feelings. Lady Eskside looked at him, kept looking at him, with a face in which sympathy shone—along with some other expression not so easy to be defined.

“Richard,” she said, in a low voice, “all you say is true—who can know it better than I do? but oh, my dear, mind! she could have had no power on your life, if you had not given it to her—of your free will.”

“So, then, it is I alone who am to blame?” said Richard, with a laugh, which was half rage and half scorn. “I might have known that was what you were sure to say.”

“Yes, you might have known it,” said Lady Eskside—“for nothing, I hope, will ever shut my mind to justice; but not because I am in the habit of reproaching you, Richard—for that I never did, even when you had made my heart sore; but we need not quarrel about it, you and me. What I want to know is, if you do not see now the still greater importance of getting some hold upon her—for Valentine’s—for all our sakes?”

“You will never get a hold upon her; it is folly to dream of it. She is beyond your reach, or that of any reasonable creature. Mother, come in—the bell must have rung for dinner.”

“I have written to the man we employed before,” said Lady Eskside, hurriedly. “This was what I wanted to say. Do not stare at me, Richard! I will not put up with it. I must do my duty as I see it, and whatever comes of it. I have given him all the particulars I could, and told him to try every means, and lose no time. Her heart must be soft after giving up her child.”

“So,” said Richard, with a quivering pale smile, “you consult me what should be done after all the steps have been taken. This is kind! You have taken care to provide for my domestic comfort, mother——”

“If we should find her—which God grant!—I will take charge of her,” said Lady Eskside, with a flush of resentment. “Neither your comfort nor your pride shall be interfered with—never fear.”

“You are most considerate, mother,” said Richard. “Your house, then, is to be finally closed to me, after the effort I have made to revisit it? Well, after all, I suppose the Palazzo Graziani suits best.”

“You are cruel to say so, Richard,” said his mother. Tears came quickly to her bright old eyes; but at that moment Lord Eskside looked out from one of the drawing-room windows, and stayed the further progress of the quarrel.

“What are you two doing there, philandering like a lad and a lass?” said the old lord. “Richard, bring your mother in; she’ll catch cold. There’s a heavy dew falling, though it’s a fine night.”

“It is my mother who insists on staying out in the night air, which I disapprove of,” said Richard. “The Italians have a prejudice on the subject of sunset. They think it the most dangerous hour of the day. I am so much of an Italian now—and likely to be more so—that I have taken up their ideas—at least so far as sunset is concerned.”

“So much an Italian—and likely to be more so!—I hope not, I hope not, Richard,” said his father. “After this good beginning you have made, it will be hard upon your poor mother and me if we cannot tempt you home.”

“Or drive me away for ever,” said Richard, so low that his mother only heard him. She grasped his

arm with a sudden vehemence of mingled love and anger, which for the moment startled him, and then dropped it, and stepped in through the window, letting the subject drop altogether. She was unusually bright at dinner, excited, as it seemed, by the sharp little encounter she had just had, which had stirred up all her powers. Lord Eskside, who was not of a fanciful nature, and whose moods did not change so quickly, regarded her with some suspicion. He was himself depressed by his son's approaching departure, and somewhat disposed to be angry, as he generally was when depressed.

"You must have been saying something to your mother to raise her spirits," he said, after one or two ineffectual attempts to subdue her—when Richard and he were left to their claret.

"Not I, sir," said Richard, "on the contrary; my mother has ideas with which I disagree entirely."

"Ay, boy, to be sure," said the old lord, "she was saying something to me. Then it was opposition, and not satisfaction as I thought? You see, Richard, women have their own ways of thinking. We cannot always follow their reasoning; but in the main your mother's perhaps right."

And having said this, in mild backing up of his wife's bolder suggestions, Lord Eskside changed the subject and spoke of the property, and of new leases he was granting, and the improvement of the estate.

"There is a great deal of land about Lasswade that might be feued very advantageously—but I would not do it without ascertaining your feeling on the subject, Richard. It can't make much difference in my time; but in the course of nature that time can't be very long."

"I wish, it might be a hundred years," said Richard, with no false sentiment; for indeed, apart from

natural affection, to be Lord Eskside and live up here in the paternal chateau among the woods did not charm his imagination much.

"That is all very pleasant for you to say," said his father, receiving and dismissing the compliment with a wave of his hand; "but, as I say, in the course of nature my time must be but short. There is just the question about the amenities upon which every man has his own opinion——"

"The—— what did you say?" asked Richard, puzzled.

"The amenities of the place. It is true the village is not visible from the house, but if in the future you were to find the new houses that might be built an eyesore——"

"That is entirely a British notion," Richard answered, with a smile; "I think great part of the beauty in Italy is from the universal life you see everywhere—villages climbing up every hillside. No; I have no English prejudices on that point."

"I don't know about it being an English prejudice," said Lord Eskside, who never forgot the distinction between English and Scotch, as his son invariably did. "Then you don't object to feuing? Willie Maitland will be a proud man. He has told me often I might add a thousand a-year to the income of the property by judicious feus. They will be taken up by all kind of shopkeeper bodies, retired tradesmen, and the like—a consideration which gives me little trouble, Richard, but may perhaps act upon you. No? Well you're a philosopher: they're bad at an election; they're totally beyond your control—unless, indeed, your mother and I were to put ourselves out of our way to visit and make of them; but we would want a strong inducement for that."

Here Lord Eskside looked at his



son with a look of mild entreaty, not saying anything; and Richard knew his father well enough to comprehend.

"You must not think of that, sir,—indeed you must not. Am I in a position to be set up before the county, and have every fact of my life brought up against me? No, father, anything else you like—but let me stay among strangers, where the circumstances of my existence need not be inquired into."

"I don't know that you have anything to be ashamed of," said Lord Eskside, with a husky voice.

"Anyhow, I cannot offer myself as a subject to be discussed by all the world," said Richard. Courage, he said to himself—to-morrow and all this will be over! He made a strenuous effort to be patient, strengthened by this thought.

"Well, Richard, if you have made up your mind—but you know our wishes," said the old lord with a sigh. Little Val had been exercising his grandfather's temper by his excursions round the table a little while before. He had been obstinate and childishly disobedient till he was carried off by the ladies; and Lord Eskside, somewhat out of temper, as I have said, by reason of being depressed in spirits, had been ready to augur evil of the child's future career. But the contradiction of Val's father was more grave. When he resisted his parent's wishes it was of little use to be angry. The old lord sighed with a dreary sense that nothing was to be made by struggling. Of all hopeless endeavours that of attempting to make your children carry out the plans you have formed, is (he thought to himself) the most hopeless. Everything might favour the project which would make a man's friends happy, and satisfy all their aspirations for him; when, lo! a causeless caprice, a foolish dislike, would balk every-

thing. It is true that he had for years resigned the hope of seeing Richard take his true place in the county, and show at once to the new men what the good old blood was worth, and to the old gentry that the Rosses were still their leaders, as they had been for generations; but this visit had brought a renewal of all the old visions. He had seen with a secret pride, of which, even to his wife, he had not breathed a word, his son assume with ease a social position above his brightest hopes. The county had not only received him, but followed him, admired him, listened to his opinions as those of an oracle. To bring him in for the county after this, and to carry his election by acclamation, would be child's-play, his father thought. But Richard did not see it. He was, or assumed to be, indifferent to the applause of "the county." He cared nothing for his own country, or for that blessedness of dwelling among his own people which Scripture itself has celebrated. No wonder that Lord Eskside should sigh. "I believe you think more of these fiddling play-acting foreigners," he said, after an interval of silence, during which his eyebrows and his under lip had been in full activity, "than for all our traditions, and all the duties of your condition in life."

"Every man has his taste, sir," Richard answered, with a shrug of his shoulders, which irritated his father still more deeply.

"Well, you are old enough to judge for yourself," he said, getting up abruptly from the table. A great many things to say to his son had been in the old lord's mind. He had meant to expound to him his own view of the politics of the day, at home, to which naturally Richard had not paid much attention. He had meant to impress upon him the line the Rosses had always

taken in questions exclusively Scotch. But all this was cut short by Richard's refusal even to consider the question. Being sad beforehand by reason of his son's departure, I leave you to imagine how melancholy-cross and disappointed Lord Eskside was now.

"What! is that imp still up?" he said, as going into the drawing-room he stumbled over his own best-beloved stick, upon which Val had been riding races round the room. "How dared you take my stick, sir? If you do that again you shall be whipped."

"You daren't whip me," cried saucy Valentine. "Grandma says I am never to be frightened no more—I ain't; and I'm to have what I want. Grandma! he is taking my stick away!"

"Your stick, ye little whipper-snapper! No; one generation succeeds another soon enough, but not so soon as that. Send the boy to his bed, my lady. He ought to have been there an hour ago."

"Just for this night," said Lady Eskside, as she caught the little rebel, and, holding him close in her arms, smoothed the ruffled curls on his forehead, and whispered in his ear that he was to be good, and not to make grandpa angry. "Just for this night—as his father is going away."

"Oh, his father!" said her husband, with a slight snort of irritation which showed Lady Eskside that the last evening had been little more satisfactory to him than to herself. Her own voice had faltered a little as she spoke of Richard's departure, and she looked at him wistfully, with an incipient tear in the corner of her eye, hoping (though she might have known better) for some response; but Richard, as bland and gentle as ever, had seated himself by Mary, to whom he was talking, and altogether ignored his

mother's furtive appeal. Valentine gave her enough to do just at that moment to hold him, which, perhaps, was well for her; and Lord Eskside walked away to the other end of the room, pretending to look at the books which were scattered about the tables, and whistling softly under his breath, which was one of his ways of showing irritation. Even Mary was agitated she scarcely knew why; not on Richard's account, she said to herself, but as feeling the suppressed excitement in the house, the secret sense of disappointment and deep heart-dissatisfaction which was in those two old people, who had but little time before them to be happy in, and so wanted the sunshine of life all the more. Richard's visit had been a success in one sense. It had answered to their highest hopes, and more than answered; but yet in more intimate concerns, in a still closer point of view, it had been a failure; and of this the father and mother were all the more tremulously sensible that he showed so little consciousness of it—nay, no consciousness at all. He sat for a long time by Mary, talking to her of the most ordinary subjects, while his mother sat silent in her chair, and Lord Eskside, at the other end of the room, made-believe to look for something in the drawers of one of the great cabinets, opening and shutting them impatiently. Richard sat and talked quite calmly during these demonstrations, unaffected by them. He kissed his child coolly on the forehead, and bid him good-bye, with something like a sentiment of internal gratitude to be rid of the little plague, who rather repelled than attracted him. Mary went to her room shortly after Valentine's removal, which was effected with some difficulty, pleading a headache, and in reality unable to bear longer the painful atmosphere of family con-



straint—Lady Eskside's half-appealing, half-affronted looks, and anxious consciousness of every movement her son made, and the old lord's irritation, which was more demonstrative. Then the three who were left gathered together round the fire, and some commonplace conversation—conversation studiously kept on the level of commonplace—ensued. Richard was to start early next morning, and proposed to take leave of his mother that night—"not to disturb her at such an unearthly hour," he said. "Did you ever leave the house at any hour when I did not make you your breakfast and see you away?" Lady Eskside asked, with a thrill of pain in her voice. And as she left the room, she grasped his hand, and looked wistfully in his face, while he stooped to kiss her. "Richard," she said in a half whisper, as the two faces approached close to each other, "for myself I do not ask anything—but, oh, mind, your father is an old man! Please him if you can."

Lord Eskside was leaning upon the mantelpiece, gazing into the fire. He continued the same com-

monplace strain of talk when his son came back to him. How badly the trains corresponded; how hard it would be, without waiting at cross stations and losing much time, to accomplish the journey. "And as you have to make so early a start you should go to your bed soon, my boy," he said, and held out his hand; then grasping his son's, as his wife had done, added hastily, his eyebrows working up and down—"What I have been saying to you, Richard, may look less important to you than it does to me; but if you would make an effort to please your mother! She's been a good mother to you; and neither I nor anything in the world can give her the pleasure that you could. Good night. I shall see you in the morning;" and Lord Eskside took up his candle and hurried away.

The effect of this double appeal, so pathetically repeated, was not, I fear, all that it should have been. When he reached his own room, Richard yawned, and stretching his arms above his head—"Thank heaven! I shall be out of this to-morrow," he said.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

"I have now to change the scene and bring before the notice of the reader another group, representing another side of the picture, with interests still more opposite to those of Lord Eskside and his heir-apparent than were, even, the interests of that heir-apparent's mother. But to exhibit this other side, I have fortunately no need to descend to the lower levels of society, to Jean Macfarlane's disreputable tavern, or any haunt of doubtful people. On the contrary, I know no region of more unblemished respectability or higher character than Moray Place in Edinburgh, which is the spot I

wish to indicate. Strangers and tourists do not know much of Moray Place. To them—and great is their good-fortune—Edinburgh means the noble crowned ridge of the Old-Town, fading off misty and mysterious into the wooded valley beneath; the great crags of the castle rising into mid-sky, and the beautiful background of hills. Upon this they gaze from the plateau of Princes Street; and far might they wander without seeing anything half so fine as that storied height, lying grey in sunshine, or twinkling with multitudinous lights, as the blue poetic twilight steals over the Old Town.

But on the other side of that middle ground of Princes Street lies a New Town, over which our grandfathers rejoiced greatly as men rejoice over the works of their own hands, despite the fullest acknowledgment of the work of their ancestors. There lie crescents, squares, and places, following the downward sweep of the hill, with, it is true, no despicable landscape to survey (chiefly from the back windows), yet shutting themselves out with surprising complacency from all that distinguishes Edinburgh amid the other cities of the world. Nobody can say that we of the Scots nation are not proud of our metropolis ; but this is how our fathers and grandfathers—acute humorous souls as most of them were, with a large spice of romance in them, and of much more distinctly marked individual character than we possess in our day—asserted the fundamental indifference of human nature, in the long-run, to natural beauty. How comfortable, how commodious are those huge solid houses !—houses built for men to be warm in, to feast in, and gather their friends about them, but not with any æsthetical meaning. Of all these streets, and squares, and crescents, Moray Place perhaps is the most “palatial,” or was, at least, at the period of which I speak. Personally, I confess that it makes a very peculiar impression on me. Years ago, so many that I dare not count them, there appeared in the pages of this Magazine a weird and terrible story called the “Iron Shroud,” in which the feelings of an unhappy criminal shut up in an iron cell (I think, to make the horror greater, of his own invention) which by some infernal contrivance diminished every day, window after window disappearing before the wretch’s eyes, until at last the horrible prison fell upon him and became at once his grave and his

shroud—were depicted with vivid power. This thrilling tale always returns to my mind when I stand within the grand and gloomy enclosure of Moray Place. It seems to me that the walls quiver and draw closer even while I look at them ; and if the circle were gradually to lessen, one window disappearing after another, and the whole approaching slowly, fatally towards the centre, I should not be surprised. But in Edinburgh, Moray Place is, or was, considered a noble circus of houses, and nobody feels afraid to live in it. I suppose as it has now stood so long, it will never crash together, and descend on the head of some breathless wretch in the garden which forms its centre ; but a superstitious dread of this catastrophe, I own, would haunt me if I were rich enough to be able to live in Moray Place.

Mr Alexander Pringle, however, never once thought of this when he established his tabernacle there. This gentleman was an advocate, to use the Scotch term—the cosmopolitan and universal term, instead of the utterly conventional and unmeaning appellation of barrister common to the English alone—at the Scotch bar. His father before him had been a W.S., or Writer to the Signet—a title of which I confess myself unable to explain the exact formal meaning. How these comparatively unimportant people came to be the heirs-at-law, failing the Rosses, of the barony of Eskside, I need not tell. Pringle is a name which bears no distinction in its mere sound like Howard or Seymour ; but notwithstanding, it is what is called in Scotland “a good name ;” and this branch of the Pringles were direct descendants from one of the Eskside barons. When Dick Ross’s misfortunes happened, and his wife forsook him, Mr Alexander Pringle,



then himself recently married, producing heirs at a rate which would have frightened any political economist, and possessing a wife far too virtuous ever to think of running away from him, became all at once a person of consequence. He felt it himself more than any one, yet all society (in Moray Place) had felt it. By this time he had a very pretty little family, seven boys and one girl, all healthy, vigorous, and showing every appearance of long and prosperous life.

Fear not, dear reader! I do not mean to follow in this history the fortunes of Sandy, Willie, Jamie, Val, Bob, Tom, and Ben. They were excellent fellows, and eventually received an admirable education at the Edinburgh Academy; but I dare not enter upon the chronicle of such a race of giants. Val was born about the time that Richard Ross's children disappeared, and the Pringles christened the baby Valentine Ross, feeling that this might be a comfort to the old lord, whose "name-son" had thus mysteriously disappeared. Mr Pringle spoke of this event as an "inscrutable dispensation," and lamented his cousin's strange misfortunes to everybody he encountered. But dreadful as the misfortune was, it made him several inches higher, and threw a wavering and uncertain glimmer of possible fortune to come over the unconscious heads of Sandy, Willie, Val, and the rest. They cared very little, but their father cared much, and was very wide awake, and constantly on the watch for every new event that might happen on Eskside. The seven years of quiet, during which nothing was heard of Richard's children, ripened his hopes to such an extent that he almost felt himself the next in succession; for a mild *diletante* like Dick Ross, who always lived abroad, did not seem an ob-

stacle worth counting. Perhaps he was in consequence a little less careful of his practice at the bar; for this tantalising shadow of a coronet had an effect upon his being which was scarcely justified by the circumstances: anyhow, though they managed to keep up their establishment in Moray Place, and to give the boys a good education, the Pringles did not advance in prosperity and comfort as they ought to have done, considering how well-connected they were, and the "good abilities" of the head of the house. Though he would sometimes foolishly show a disregard for the punctilios of the law in his own person, and was now and then outwitted in an argument, yet Mr Pringle was understood to be an excellent lawyer; and he had a certain gift of lucidity in stating an argument which found him favour alike in the eyes of clients and of judges. Had he been a little more energetic, probably he would have already begun to run the course of legal preferment in Scotland. He was sheriff of the county in which his little property lay; and at one time no man had a better chance of rising to the rank of Solicitor-General or even Lord Advocate, and of finally settling as Lord Pringle or Lord Dalruluzian (the name of his property) upon the judicial bench. But his progress was arrested by this shadow of a possible promotion with which his profession would have nothing to do. Lord Dalruluzian might be a sufficiently great title if no more substantial dignity was to be had, but Lord Eskside was higher; and the man's imagination went off wildly after the hereditary barony, leaving the reward of legal eminence far in the background. Gradually he had built himself up with the thought of this advancement; and though they

were by no means rich enough to afford it, nothing but his wife's persistent holding back would have kept him from sending Sandy, his eldest boy, to Eton, by way of preparing him for his possible dignity. For the days when boys were sent from far and near to the High School of Edinburgh are over; and it is now the Scottish parent's pride to make English schoolboys of his sons, and to eliminate from the speech of his daughters all trace of their native accent. Mrs Pringle, however, was prudent enough to withstand her husband's desire. "What would he do at Eton?" she said. "Learn English? If he's not content with the English you and I speak, it's a pity; and as for manners, he behaves himself very well in company as it is, and you'll never convince me that ill-mannered louts will be made into gentlemen by a year or two at a public school. You may send him if you like, Alexander—you're the master—but you will get no countenance from me." When a well-conditioned husband is told that he is the master, there is an end of him. Mr Pringle was not made of hard enough material to resist so strong an opposition; and then it would have cost a great deal of money. "Well, my dear, we'll talk it over another time," he said, and put off the final decision indefinitely; which was a virtual giving in without the necessity of acknowledging defeat.

After all this gradually growing satisfaction and confidence in his own prospects, it is almost impossible to describe the tremendous effect which the news of Richard's return, and of the strange events which had taken place at Rosseraig, had upon the presumptive heir. He spoke not a word to any one for the first two days, but went about his business moodily, like a man under

the shadow of some deadly cloud. The first shock was terrible, and scarcely less terrible was the excitement with which he listened to any rumour that reached him piecing the bits of news together. For a week he neglected his business; forsook, except when his attendance was compulsory, the Parliament House; and, if he could have had his will, would have done nothing all day but discuss the astounding tale, which at first he declared to be entire fiction, a made-up story, and pretended to laugh at. He hung about his dressing-room door in the morning, while his wife finished her toilet, talking of it through the door-way; he hovered round the breakfast-table, after he had finished his meal, neglecting his 'Scotsman'; he was continually appearing in the drawing-room when Mrs Pringle did not want him, and "deaved her," as she said, with this eternal subject. To no one else could he speak with freedom; but this sweet privilege of wifehood, instead of being an unmingled good, often becomes, in the imperfection of all created things, a bore to the happy being who is thus elevated into the ideal position of her spouse's *alter ego*. Mrs Pringle was not sentimental, and she soon got heartily sick of the subject. She would have cheerfully sold, at any time, for a new dinner dress—a thing she was pretty generally in want of—all her chances, which she had no faith in, of ever becoming Lady Eskside.

"Don't you think, Alexander," she said, having been driven beyond endurance by his rejection of a proposed match at golf on Musselburgh Links,—a thing which proved the profound gravity of the crisis,— "don't you think that the best thing you could do would be to take the coach and go out to Lasswade, and inquire for yourself? Take Violet



with you—a little fresh air would do her good; and if you were to talk this over with somebody who knows about it, instead of with me, that knows nothing more than yourself——”

“Go—to Lasswade!” said Mr Pringle—“that is a step that never occurred to me. No; I have not been invited to Rossraig to meet Dick, and it would look very strange if I were to go where nobody is wanting me. If you think, indeed, that Vi would be better for a little change—— But no; Lord Eskside would not like it—there would be an undignified look about it—an underhand look; still, if you think an expedition would be good for Vi——”

It was thus that under pressure of a personal anxiety a man maundered and hesitated who could give very sound advice to his clients, and could speak very much to the purpose before the Lords of Session. Mrs Pringle knew all this, and did not despise her husband. She felt that she herself was wiser in their own practical concerns than he was, but gave him full credit for all his other advantages, and for that ability in his profession which did not always make itself apparent at home. And she had a great many things to do on this particular afternoon, and was driven nearly out of her senses, she allowed afterwards, by this eternal discussion about Dick Ross’s children and the succession to Eskside.

“Do you remember,” she said, exercising her ingenuity, with as little waste of words as possible—for the mother of seven sons, not to speak of one little daughter besides, who is not rich enough to keep a great many servants, has not much time to waste in talk—“that little cottage at the Hewan, which I was always

so fond of? The children are fond of it too. As you are off your match, and have the afternoon to spare, go away down and see if the Hewan is let, and whether we can have it for the summer.”

“But, my dear, it is not half big enough for us,” Mr Pringle began.

His wife turned upon him a momentary look of impatience. “What does it matter whether it’s big or little, when you want to see what is going on?” she said. “Take the child with you, and ask about it. It would be fine to have such a place, to send Vi when the heat gets too much for her.” These last words were spoken in perfect good faith, for people in Edinburgh keep up a fiction of believing that the heat is too much for them—as if they were in London or Paris, or anywhere else, where people love a yearly change.

“So it would,” said Mr Pringle; “and you could go out yourself sometimes and spend a long day. It would do you good, my dear. I think I will go.”

“Run and tell nursie to put on your best hat, Violet,” said her mother; “and you may have your kid gloves, if you will be sure not to lose them. You are going out to the country with papa.”

Little Violet rose from where she had been sitting, with a family of dolls round her, on the carpet. She had been giving her family their daily lessons, and felt it a very important duty. She was but six years old—one of those fair-haired little maidens who abound in Scotland, with hair of two shades of colour, much brighter in the half-curved locks which lay about her shoulders than on her head. With these light locks she had dark eyes, an unusual combination, and pretty infant features, scarcely formed yet into anything which gave promise

of beauty. She was so light that Sandy, her big brother, could hold her up in his hand, to the admiration of all beholders. One daughter in such a family holds an ideal position, such as few girls achieve otherwise at so early an age. Their little sister was the very princess of all these boys. The big ones petted and spoiled her, the little ones believed in and revered her. To the one she was something more dainty than any plaything—a living doll, the prettiest ornament in the house, and the only one which could be handled without breaking wantonly, on purpose to have them punished, in their hands; and to the others she was a small mother, quaintly unlike the big one, yet imposing upon them by her assumption of the maternal ways and authority. When she addressed the nursery audience with, "Now you 'ittle boys, mind what I say to you," the babies acknowledged the shadow of authority, and felt that Vi wielded a visionary sceptre. She was very serious in her views of life, and held what might appear to some people exaggerated ideas as to the guilt of spilling your tea upon your frock, or tearing your pinafore; and was apt to wonder where naughty little children who did such things expected to go to, with an unswerving and perfectly satisfied faith in everlasting retribution, such as would have edified the severest believer. Violet awarded these immense penalties to very trifling offences, not being as yet wise enough to discriminate or get her landscape into perspective. Her dolls were taught their duty in the most forcible way, and she herself carried out her tenets by punishing them severely when they displeased her. She got up from the midst of them now, and though she had been lecturing them solemnly a few minutes before,

huddled them up, with legs and arms in every kind of contortion, into a corner which was appropriated to her. She walked up-stairs very gravely to be dressed, but made such a fuss about her kid gloves, that nurse, with two baby boys on her hands, was nearly driven to her wits' end. On ordinary occasions, Vi wore little cotton gloves, with the tops of the fingers sewed inside in a little lump, which made her small hands (as they used to make mine) extremely uncomfortable. When she was fully equipped, she was a very trim little woman—not fine, but as imposing and dignified in her appearance as a lady of six can manage to be; and when the anxious heir-at-law to the Eskside barony came down-stairs with her to start on this mission of inquiry, she was very particular that he should have his umbrella nicely rolled, and that his hat should be brushed to perfection. She liked her papa to be neat, as she was, and took, in short, a general charge of him, as of all the house.

This, dear reader, is the villain of this history, who is bent on spoiling, if he can, the hero's prospects, and working confusion in all the arrangements of the Eskside family, for the advantage of himself and his Sandy, the next heir, failing Richard Ross's problematical children. But on this particular day when he lifted his little girl into the coach, and made her comfortable, and smiled at her as she chatted to him, notwithstanding all his preoccupations, he was not a very bad villain. He would have liked to turn out to the streets the little beggar's brat of whom he had heard such incredible stories, and who was supposed to be likely to supplant in his lawful inheritance himself and his handsome boys; but then he had never realised the individuality of this beggar's brat, while his heart was



very much 'set upon his own children and their advantage—a state of mind not very uncommon. He was as good to little Violet as if he had been an example of all the virtues, and instead of feeling at all ashamed of so very small a companion, was as proud of her as if she had been a duchess. To see her brighten up as the coach rolled on through the green country roads distracted him for the first time from his all-absorbing anxiety; and as they came in sight of the village of Lasswade, and he pointed out the river and the woods and the village houses to

little Vi, he almost forgot all about the barony of Eskside. You would say that evil intentions could scarcely take very deep root in a heart so occupied; but human nature is very subtle in its combinations, and it is curious how easily virtue can sometimes accommodate itself by the side of very ill neighbours. Mr Pringle had no idea or intention of working mischief, though mischief might no doubt arise by chance in his path. All that he wanted was justice, and to make sure that there was no cuckoo's egg foisted into the nest at Eskside.

## CHAPTER IX.

"Oh, sir, no, sir," said the smiling landlord at the Black Bull, where Mr Pringle went to have some luncheon and to order "a machine," to take Vi and himself to the Hewan—the little cottage, which was the ostensible end of his mission—"there's different stories going about the country, but we must not believe all we hear. The real truth is, I'm assured by them that ought to know, that the little boy came over from foreign parts with his father, the Honourable Richard Ross, to be brought up as is befitting, in a decent-like house, and among folk that have some fear of God before their eyes,—which it's no easy to find, so far as I can hear, abroad."

"Came over with his father!" cried Mr Pringle, through whose soul this information smote like a sword. If this was the case, farewell to the beggar's brat theory, and to all hope both for Sandy and himself.

"Well, that's the most reasonable story," said the landlord; "there's plenty of other nonsense flying about the country. What we a' heard at first was, that some gangrel body

knockit loud and lang at the ha' door the night of that awfu' storm, and threw in a bundle, nigh knocking over auld Harding the butler; and when lights were got—for the lamp was blown out by the wind—it was found to be this boy. It's an awfu' age for sensation this, and that's the sensational story folk ca' it. But Mr Richard, there can be nae doubt, has been home direct from Florence and Eitaly, and what so likely as that he should bring the bairn himsel'? So far as I can learn, a'boddy that is anybody, so to speak, the gentry and them that ought to ken, believes he came with his father. The servants and folk about the town uphold the other story; but you ken, sir, the kind of story that pleases common folk best? Aye something wonderful; fancy afore reason."

"But surely it is very easy to get to the bottom of it," said Mr Pringle, with a beating heart. "Was the child with Mr Ross, for instance, when he arrived?"

"Na, I never heard that," said the landlord, swaying over to the other side. "The carriage passed by our windows. So far as I could see,

there was but himself inside, and his man on the box. We maunna inquire too close into details, sir—especially you that are a relation of the family.”

“That is exactly why it is so important I should know.”

“Well-a-well, sir! they do say, I allow,” said the man, sinking his voice, “that the little laddie was here before his father; that’s rather my own opinion—no that I ever saw him. They sent down here to inquire about a woman and a wean; nae woman or wean had been here. There was one, I heard, at Jean Macfarlane’s on the other side of the bridge, which is a place no decent person can be expected to ken about.”

“And who was the woman?” said Mr Pringle, with breathless interest.

“Na, that’s mair than I can tell. Some say a randy wife that’s been seen of late about the countryside; some says one thing and some another. Auld Simon the postman and Merran Miller were twa I’m told that saw her; but this is a’ hearsay—a’ hearsay; I ken naething of my own knowledge. I must say, however,” added the landlord, seriously, “that I blame themselves up at the big house for most of the stir. They sent down inquiring and inquiring, putting things into folk’s heads about this woman and the wean. My lord had a’ them that saw her up to the house, and put them through an examination. It was not a prudent thing to do—it was that, more than anything else, that made folk begin to talk.”

“And was that before Richard Ross came home?”

“Oh ay, sir—oh ay; a good week before.”

“At the time, in short, that the child came?” said Mr Pringle, with legal clearness.

“Well, Mr Pringle—about the

time the bairn was said to have come, I’ll no deny; but a’body that’s best able to judge has warned me no to build my faith on a coincidence like that. Maist likely it was nothing more than a co-inn-cidence. They’re queer things, as you that are a lawyer must know.”

“Yes, they are queer things,” said Mr Pringle, with a flicker of hope; and then he changed the conversation, and began to inquire about the Hewan, and whether it was let for the season, or if any one had been in treaty for it. “My wife has a fancy for the place. She was there when she was young,” he said, half apologetically.

“But it’s a wee bit box of a place—no fit for your fine family. It would bring the roses, though, into little Miss’s cheeks, for the air’s grand up on that braehead.”

“It is just for her we want it,” Mr Pringle said, with an unusual openness of confidence. “She is rather pale. Come, Vi, there is the gig at the door.”

Vi walked down-stairs very demurely and got into the gig, trying to look as if she mounted with some dignified difficulty, and not to clamber up with the speed and sureness which her breeding among so many boys had taught her. She had been listening, though she took no part in the talk. “Who is the little boy, papa?” she said, curiously, as they drove briskly along through the keen but sunshiny air.

“A little boy at Rosscraig up yonder among the trees. Do you see the turrets, Vi?”

“Yes, I see them: are they made of gold? and is he a bad little boy, papa?”

“No, Vi; I don’t suppose he means it, and you don’t understand, my pet; but it would be very bad for Sandy and the rest if he were to stay there.”



"Then, papa, if it will be bad for Sandy, and the little boy is naughty, why not drive up the avenue and take him and carry him somewhere where he can do no harm?"

This was Violet's incisive way of dealing with difficulties. She had all the instincts of a grand inquisitor: and would have acted with the same benevolent absorption in the grand object of doing good to her patient whether he liked it or no. The pair drove at a spanking pace up the pretty road among the budding trees, through which at intervals there were glimpses of Esk brawling over his boulders, his brown impetuous stream all flecked with foam, like a horse in full career. A sensation of positive happiness was in Mr Pringle's mind as he drove along the familiar road through the country which he hoped might yet acknowledge his influence and authority. He could not have kidnapped the little offender as Violet suggested; but he was glad to think that there was every chance he was an impostor, and the field clear for himself and his heir. A lawsuit rose up before him in fullest dramatic detail, a kind of thing very attractive to his professional imagination. He saw how much more difficult it would be on the other side to prove the right of this supposititious heir, than it would be on his to throw doubt upon him. I do not think the thought ever crossed his mind that the child might not be supposititious at all, but the real grandson of Lord Eskside. It is so much easier when you are deeply interested in a subject to see your own side of the question, and to believe that yours is the side of right. In his sense of the possibilities of the case his spirits rose, and he enjoyed his drive to the Hewan with his innocent little girl beside him. Up they went, mounting the long

slope, now letting the horse walk at the steep parts, now urging him to a momentary spurt, now rolling rapidly along on a shady level, with the branches almost meeting overhead. The day was warm for April, yet the wind was fresh and chilly, and blew in their faces with a keen and sweet freshness which brought the colour to little Violet's cheek. "Little Vi would change into little Rose up here on Eskside," said Violet's father—he had not felt so light of heart for many a day.

The Hewan is the tiniest of little cottages, perched high up on a bank of the Esk, and surveying for a mile or two the course of the picturesque little stream between its high wooded banks, with here and there a pretty house shining far off among the trees, on some little plateau of greensward, and the sound of the river filling the air with a soft rustling and tinkling. Alas! there are paper-mills now along the course of that romantic stream. I was but six years old, like Violet, when I first saw that wild little place, and ever since (how long a time!) it has remained in my mind, charming me with vague longings. Vi trotted to the grassy ridge and gazed down the course of the stream and said nothing; for what can a child say, who has no phrases about the beautiful at her tongue's end, and can only stare and wonder, and recollect all her life after, that brawling, surging river, those high trees, inclining from either bank towards each other, and that ineffable roof of sky? The old woman who kept the cottage consented that it was still unlet, and threw no difficulties in the way; and Mr Pringle secured it there and then for the summer. "I should like to buy it," he said to himself, "if it were not——" The idea of the great possibilities before him suddenly surged upwards, flooding his soul;

and then a hunger seized him for the river, and the woods, and the fair country which they threaded through. He wanted to have them, to possess them—not the rent of them, or the wealth of them, but themselves—a passion of acquisition which is something like love, swelling suddenly in his heart. He forgot himself gazing at them, till Vi roused him, plucking at his coat, “Papa, it is bonnie ; but why do you look and look, with your eyes so big and strange, like the wolf that ate little Red Riding Hood ?”

“Am I like a wolf ?” he said, half laughing, yet tremulous in his momentary passion, seizing the child in his arms, and lifting her up to share his view. “Look, Vi ! perhaps some day all that may be yours and mine.”

Violet looked gravely as a duty ; but there was something in his strenuous grasp that frightened her, and she struggled to be put down. “I do not think,” she said, with precocious philosophy, “that it would be any bonnier if it was yours, papa—or even mine.”

Mr Pringle was tremulous after this burst of unusual emotion, for what has a respectable middle-aged lawyer to do with passion either of one kind or another ? The fit went off, and he felt slightly ashamed of himself ; but the thrill and flutter of feeling did not go off for some time. He sent the gig and horse to meet him at the Eskside gates, and taking Vi’s hand in his, went down by a pathway through the woods to a side entrance. “Perhaps we shall see this little boy we were talking of,” he said ; but he was far from having made up his mind to confront the two old people, my lord and my lady, who would see through his pretences, as people are clever to see through the guiles of their heirs. He was reluctant to face

them boldly ; but yet he was—how curious !—eager to look the present crisis in the face, and see for himself what he had to fear. After they had gone a little way along the woodland path, which was still high above the course of the stream, though accompanied all the way by the sound of its waters as by a song, Violet escaped from her father’s hand, and ran on in advance, making excursions of her own, hither and thither, darting about in her brown coat and scarlet ribbons like a robin-redbreast under the budding branches. Mr Pringle, lost in his own thoughts, let her stray before him, expecting no encounter. Presently, however, there came from Vi a little cry of surprise and excitement, which quickened his step. He hurried on after her, and came to an opening in the trees where the path widened out. It was a small circular platform open to the slope of the river-bank, and with a rustic seat placed in an excavation on the higher side of the way. Into this open space another little figure had rushed from the other side, panting and flushed, grasping a tall stick, and stood, suddenly arrested, in front of Violet, facing her, with an answering cry, with big blue eyes expanded to twice their natural size, and a face suddenly filled with curiosity and wonder. Mr Pringle it may be supposed was *blasé* in the matter of boys, and I do not think that the affectionate father of an honest plain family is ever a great amateur of childish beauty. This little figure, however, in his fantastic velvet dress, with his hat perched on the back of his head, and all his dark curls ruffled back from his bold brown forehead, struck him with a certain keen perception of beauty which was almost pain. Ah ! and with a perception of something else which was still



sharper pain. He fell back a step to recollect himself, staggered by the sudden impression. What made the child so like Richard Ross? What malignant freak of fortune had so amalgamated with the dark complexion and look which was not Richard's those family features? Mr Pringle stood as if spell-bound, contemplating the child about whom he had been so curious, about whom his curiosity was so fatally satisfied now.

"You are the boy that lives at Rosscraig," said Violet, feeling the responsibility of a first address to lie with her, but somewhat frightened, with tremblings in her voice.

"Yes; and who are you?" cried the little fellow. Mr Pringle behind noticed with a pang that he spoke with an "English accent," that advantage which the ambitious Scotch parent so highly estimates. This gave him a still deeper pang than the resemblance, for it seemed to give the final blow to the beggar's brat theory. Beggars' brats in Mr Pringle's experience spoke Scotch.

"Who are you?" said Val. "I never saw you before. Will you come and play? It's dull here, with no one to play with. Do you hear any one coming? I've run away from grandpapa."

"But you oughtn't to run away from your grandpapa," said Violet. "It is very naughty to run away, especially when the other people can't run so fast as you."

"That's the fun," cried the other, with a laugh. "If you'll come and play, I'll show you squirrels and heaps of things. But help me first to hide this big stick. I think I hear him coming—quick, quick!"

"Would he beat you with it?" said Vi, growing pale with terror.

"Quick, quick!" cried the boy, seizing her by the wrist; but just then there was a rush of steps in the sloping path which wound

down the brae to this centre, and Lord Eskside himself appeared, half angry, half laughing, pulling aside the branches to look through. "Give me back my stick, you rogue!" he cried, then paused, arrested, as Mr Pringle had been, by that pretty woodland picture. It was something between a Watteau group, and the ruder common rendering of the "Babes in the Wood:" the girl in her scarlet ribbons with liquid dark eyes uplifted, her face somewhat pale with mingled terror and self-control; the boy all flushed and beautiful in his cavalier dress, grasping her by the wrist; with the faintly green branches meeting over their heads, and the brown harmonious woods, all musical with evening notes of birds and echoes of the running water, for a background. The men on either side were so impressed by the picture that they paused mutually, in involuntary admiration. But they had both perceived each other, and though their sentiments were not very friendly, politeness commanded that they should speak.

"I hope you are well, Lord Eskside," said Mr Pringle, stepping with an effort into the charmed circle. "I had just brought my little girl through the woods to see how beautiful they are. This is my Violet; and this fine little fellow is—a visitor, I suppose?"

"Is it you, Alexander Pringle?" said Lord Eskside. "I could not believe my eyes. It is a sight for sore een to see you here."

"Indeed it is chance,—mere chance," said Pringle, with a fulness of apology which he was himself uneasily conscious was quite uncalled for. "I have been up at the Hewan, which I have taken for the summer."

"The Hewan for the summer! why, man, it's a mere cottage; and what has become of your own place?"

"Oh, I retain my old place ; but it is a long way off, and best for the autumn, when we can flit altogether. My wife is fond of the Hewan, though it is so small, and we thought it would be handy to run out for a day now and then. In short, it suits us. Does this little fellow, Lord Eskside, belong to the place ? or is he a visitor ? He seems to have struck up a sudden friendship with my girl."

"A visitor !" said Lord Eskside. "Do you mean to say you have not heard—do you see no likeness in him ? This is my grandson, Pringle—my successor one day, I hope—Richard's eldest son."

"Richard's son !—you are joking," said Mr Pringle, growing pale, but with a smile that hurt him,— "you are joking, Lord Eskside ; a child of that complexion Richard's son !"

Lord Eskside felt that his adversary had hit the blot—and, to tell the truth, he himself had never perceived Val's resemblance to Richard. "Colouring is not everything," he said ; "I suppose he has his complexion from his mother : " then with a return blow, "but I cannot expect you to be very much delighted with the sight of him, Pringle ; he takes the wind out of your sails—yours and your boys'."

"I hope my boys will be able to manage for themselves," said Pringle, with a forced laugh. "If I say that I don't see the resemblance, it is for no such reason. I have never hungered for other folk's rights : but that is one thing and justice is another. Vi, my dear, we must go."

"What ! won't you come and see my lady ? She will be affronted if you pass so near without calling ; and you see," said the old lord, with an effort at cordiality, "the children have made friends already. Come and have some dinner, man, before

you go home. You know me of old. My bark is waur than my bite—I meant no harm."

"Oh, there is no offence," said the heir-at-law ; "but it's getting late for a delicate child, and our gig is waiting at the wood-gate. Violet, you must bid the little man good-bye."

"He is not a naughty boy, papa, as you said—he is a nice boy," said Vi, looking up with an appeal in her eyes ; "please, I should like to stay."

"And what made you think he was naughty, my bonnie girl ?" said Lord Eskside, in insinuating tones.

"Come, come, Violet, you must be obedient," said her father, hastily, shaking hands with his kinsman, whose old face, half grim, half humorous, was lighted up with sudden and keen enjoyment of the situation. Mr Pringle hurried his daughter on almost hastily in the confusion of his feelings. He had never been harsh to her before ; and Violet, in her disappointment, took to crying quietly under her breath. "I should like to stay—I should like to stay," she murmured, till out of pure exasperation the kindest of fathers could have whipped her, and thought of that operation as an actual relief to his feelings. Lord Eskside, on his part, stood still in the clearing, holding back Val, who was more vehement. "I want her to play with me, and you said I was to have whatever I wanted," the boy cried, struggling with all his might to break away.

"You must know, my man, that there are many things which we all want and cannot get," cried the old lord, holding him fast ; and then he burst into a low laugh. "Here's a bonnie state of affairs already," he said to himself : "Richard's son breaking bounds to be after Sandy Pringle's daughter ! It's the best joke



I've heard for many a day. Come, Val, come like a good boy. We'll go and tell grandma. She may have a little girl in her pocket for anything you and I know."

"But I don't want any little girl; I want *that* little girl," cried Val, with precocious discrimination. The old lord chuckled more and more as he half led, half dragged him up the steep path towards the house.

"Why, man, if you're after them like this already, we'll have our hands full by the time you're of age." But when he had said this, Lord Eskside paused and contemplated his grandson, and shook his head. "Can he be Richard's son after all?" the old man asked himself.

Lord Eskside, however, looked grim enough before he went into the house, where he betook himself at once to the drawing-room, in which his wife sat alone, at a window overlooking the river. He went in to her moody, with the air of a man who has something to say.

"What is the matter?" said Lady Eskside.

"Oh, nothing's the matter. We're entering into the botherations I foresaw, that's all that's the matter. Who do you think I met in the woods but that lawyer-rascal Sandy Pringle, come to spy out the nakedness of the land!"

"And what nakedness is there to spy into? and what can Sandy Pringle do to you or me?" said the old lady, with a slight elevation of her head.

"Not much, perhaps, to you or me. He's taken the Hewan, Cathe-

rine, where he can lie in wait like an auld spider till he gets us into his net."

"I don't understand you," said the old lady, with the light of battle waking in her eyes. "What does it matter to us where Sandy Pringle lives? He has been out of the question, poor man, as everybody knows, since Providence sent to my son Richard his two bonnie boys."

"It's fine romancing," said Lord Eskside. "Where's the t'other of your bonnie boys, my lady? And where is your proof of this one that will satisfy a court of law? Likeness is all very well, and natural instinct's all very well, but they make little impression on the Court of Session. And though he's a haverel in private life, Sandy Pringle was always a clever lawyer. If you do not find the woman there will be a lawsuit, that will leave Eskside but an empty title, and melt all the lands away."

"We'll find the woman," said the old lady, clasping her fine nervous hands. "I'll move earth and heaven before I'll let anything come in my boy's way."

At this moment Val burst in, rosy and excited, with his grandfather's stick, which in the vehemence of their new ideas both the child and the old man had forgotten. "Grandma, I want that little girl to play with. Send over directly," cried Val, in hot impatience, "to get me the little girl!"

"You have enough on your hands, my lady," said Lord Eskside.

## DISORDER IN DREAMLAND.

## PART II.

MISS FULFORD fretted herself a good deal about this rumour of Lieutenant Hardinge's approaching removal from Wetton. She feared that his departure at any early date would give the death-blow to her hopes, which were now never over-lively. Lydia Tarraway, who returned home the day after the dinner-party, did not write very speedily, and so left Gertrude much tormented by suspense. She owed to herself now that she had given her affections to Hardinge; and the prospect of his going away, never probably to be seen by her again, was almost more than she could bear. When she did meet Lydia, the information which that young lady had to give was not comforting. Lydia's brother Phil had been to stay for a few days at Plymouth, and had been commissioned to find out from some military acquaintances whether there was a regulation such as her militia friend had mentioned. The youth, not knowing how anxiously Gertrude waited for his reply, did not hurry to fulfil his errand, and thus it was some days before Lydia told her that the rule about recruiting was certainly as the militia officer had stated. Lydia, it is to be feared, was not without some little feeling of satisfaction at her friend's disappointment. She had herself condescended to think of fascinating Hardinge, and of course it wouldn't be pleasant to see a man who was insensible to her attractions fall a victim to her neighbour's. Miss Tarraway, however, by no means intended to waste in despair because this romance had come to nought. Though some years off the guilt

and ignominy of old-maidenhood, she knew, nevertheless, that a good many shining hours had been allowed to slip away unimproved, and she was not in the least disposed to dally with flowers from which no honey was to be gathered. With an eye to building her cell, she had been, since her visit to Colkatton, investigating the Church interest of Mr Norecott's family, and examining herself whether she could be content to settle down as the lady of a rector or vicar, and whether a young man who painted in oils could be a help meet for her. She saw with some little regret that Gertrude was unhappy; but then, why could not Gertrude do as other people had been obliged to do—give up romantic fancies, and turn her thoughts to designs that were practicable?

The evening parties which Hardinge had mentioned in his leave-taking at Colkatton duly took place. He was fairly attentive to Gertrude; but Admiral Tautbrace, who was likewise a guest, was so marked in his devotion, that if quantity could have made up for kind, the love-sick lady would have been amply compensated.

"I am sorry to hear that we are likely to lose you soon," said Miss Fulford to the Lieutenant, as they danced together on one of the evenings. It cost a painful effort to say this with any appearance of indifference while her heart was fluttering and thumping like a flying beetle trying to steer himself along a wall.

"Lose me!" echoed Hardinge. "I think not. Who says so? It's very kind of you to express regret."



Her heart shook and drummed worse than ever as this answer caused a *renaissance* of hope. She could not get on with her quest but by putting great force on herself. "Oh, I understood—that is, I heard some one say that you had only come for a fixed time, and would have to go away soon: of course it isn't correct."

"There is a fixed time when I must rejoin my regiment; but it isn't soon. I've three or four months more of this work to do."

"Only three or four months?" inquired Gertrude, with an emotion which Hardinge did not perceive.

"Well, three or four months make a pretty good spell. It will secure me what remains of the winter amusements, give me a chance of some trout-fishing, and get me off the spring drills. By that time, you know, it will be high time for me to go in; I feel myself getting rusty as it is." Thus answered that insensible young man. There was only one ray of comfort (if comfort it could be called) in what he said. The man seemed perfectly heart-whole: there was no sign of a rival.

One can suppose how, with this trouble upon her, Gertrude chafed inwardly at the Admiral's attentions. But, as I have before hinted, it was not her nature to let others see much of what she felt; so, spite of the chagrin that was fretting her, she played her part with some spirit, replied without weariness to the Admiral's remarks, and even found herself able to take a few observations of the affairs of her friends.

"I am to have the honour this quadrille, am I not?" said Admiral Tautbrace, coming in from the tea-room. "They wanted me to sit down to a rubber—and there would have been plenty of time, as you were engaged for so many dances; but I said to myself—'If it should

detain me only two minutes from the side of a certain fair lady that I know after she is disengaged, it would be a dearly bought amusement;' so I sauntered patiently about the rooms, and now have been refreshing with a cup of tea. Will you come and do likewise? It is very hard upon us fellows who have passed our youth to have these whirligig dances come into fashion. I could foot a hornpipe when I was a middy, and steer a craft through a country-dance as well as any pilot going,—hands across, you know, down the middle and up again, lots of life in that—and now I can manage to walk through a quadrille; but old timbers would never stand twirling at that pace. Everything getting too fast, by George, I say! dancing on shore like teetotums, and sending hulls through the water with steam: all a mistake, depend on it; we shall have to come back to reasonable, sensible ways."

"But the waltz is very delightful, I assure you, with a partner who, as you say, knows how to steer a craft."

"Then I shall say no more on that head, except to regret that when I passed as able to knot, reef, and steer, the art of navigating a maelstrom was not considered a necessary part of education. Our friend Miss Tarraway is not dancing so much as usual to-night."

"No indeed. As Mr Norcott does not dance, Lydia and he appear to be enjoying each other's company in the sitting-down way."

"Happy curate! she has given up her waltzes to talk to him."

Hardinge came to see Gertrude to her carriage; but though she was glad to lean on his arm for only a minute or two, she was too well assured of his indifference, after the tone in which he had spoken of his departure, to go home with a lightened heart because he came to bid

her good-night. Her spirit, which had endured so well while she was under the eyes of others, gave way as soon as she was alone, and the poor girl wept tears of poignant mortification. She felt certain that she must love the young officer for ever, and could never love any one else; and she began to contemplate a heroic martyrdom, and to think about "the rose i' the bud," and "Patience on a monument," and so on. Poor soul! proud science never taught her to stray into the doctrines of woman's rights, but there did arise in her breast a little rebellious feeling against the restrictions to which her sex was subject. For, when the idea of a martyrdom and smiling at grief began to look less captivating on further acquaintance, she asked herself who could say that, if the notion of falling in love with her were once suggested to Hardinge, he wouldn't do it; and yet she might not do anything at all to make him understand how acceptable his affection would be. She had heard and read of shrewd observers who had penetrated secrets like hers, and by a word of well-timed exhortation or explanation had made everything smooth, and put two people in the way of making each other happy. Was there nobody to act the part of the kind fairy? Anon she would lose all patience with her beloved for being so obtuse and impassible, and then blame herself for blaming him, be overcome with tenderness, and cry again as if her heart would break.

Mr Benjamin Saunders, as he rode home on the evening before mentioned, did not feel that his visit to Colkatton had been very efficacious—indeed he felt subdued and discouraged to a degree with which his sanguine nature was not familiar. By the time he got home he had decided that there were difficulties in his way, unlike what he had ever

before encountered in paying his addresses, and that he was a donkey for ever thinking of a thing so hard of achievement. This was very like giving up the idea altogether; and when he began to think of the many quarters in which his attentions would be acceptable, he felt already consoled to some extent, and able to put aside his chagrin. He was kind and affable to his mother that evening, told her all about the grate, and what he proposed to do with it, and entered into two or three business matters so as quite to delight the poor old lady, who could not help expressing her satisfaction; which having done at some length, she unfortunately reverted to his flippant mention of Miss Fulford the night before, and proceeded to point out the folly of it.

"It may sound very free and independent, my son," said she, "but I never knowed any good to come of it. Gentry folks may bend themselves to we, but us musn't never presume nothing with them. Well they know the difference betwixt us, and never forgets it. Chayney is chayney, and crockery is crockery."

His mortification returned when the young man found himself alone at night. He asked himself what could ever have set him on such a quest, and wondered how the deuce a sharp fellow like him, who could be so successful on his own level, should have invited such humiliation. And then he remembered that it was his dream that had tempted him; and, his mind once turned again to the dream, he couldn't help going over all its scenes, which came up now as vividly as when they were first presented. Once more he realised the blissful feelings produced by the vision, and felt his whole nature stirred by the touch of the old peer, and the sight of his coronet. "After all, could I



be so wrong?" inquired Benjamin of himself; "that dream meant something—I'll be hanged if it didn't! There was no promise that all this jolly catch of fish was to be had without a little trouble and patience, or perhaps without a little disappointment, only that it is to be had; and, by George! it's worth putting up with something for." His ambition revived, you see, as he reflected on the dream, and with it came a sense of shame at being so easily downcast. He had probably begun rashly and injudiciously; he would now set to work with more forethought. A moderate amount of rumination showed him that his main difficulty arose from his inferior station in life; and he was painfully impressed by his mother's remark about chayney and crockery. But then, although there was no denying that crockery is crockery, it was equally undeniable that crockery might by clever alchemy be transmuted to chayney. In brief, he perceived that the first step towards the attainment of his object must be social advancement for himself. This would have been difficult to most men in his position; but, as we have seen, he was bold and prompt. He did not let a day pass before he put an iron in the fire, as he called it.

Wetton boasted of a club, such as clubs in those days were. The Wetton Association played cricket and made excursions (sometimes giving picnics) in the summer; in winter it played cards once a-week and supped. Its meetings were held at the hotel. In order that it might be kept going at all, it had to be established on a somewhat broad basis. The auctioneer, appraiser, and land-surveyor (one and the same person) was a member, so was the cashier of the bank, so was the teacher of music and church organist, so was the young man

who came originally to lecture at the Wetton Institution, and then remained to instruct youthful Wetton in Euclid, trigonometry, the use of the Gunter's chain, and geology. But, for all that, it claimed to be a very blue-blooded society indeed; and if, like other orders of that kind, it occasionally admitted a somewhat doubtful candidate from necessity, it took care to show that the condescension was great and exceptional. With all their broad base, the members could not produce a decent field of cricketers; and in order to insure play they were compelled to invite young men of all grades, down to mechanics and labourers, to join the sport, although these were not members. Now Benjamin, after his year at Plymouth, where he learned to play cricket if he did not acquire much book-lore, was frequently honoured by an invitation to "play with the club," which he highly prized; and once or twice when Wetton played Muggytown or Slushton, he had been of the eleven, having some reputation as a bowler, which reputation was set against another reputation which he bore of being a forward and not particularly agreeable young person. Hitherto he had been quite proud of this left-handed alliance with the club; but now when he began to cast about for a lift up the social ladder, he felt that the full rights of membership must form the first rung for him to mount by; accordingly he began to think over the possible means of reaching this dignity. His father's friend, and his own early preceptor, the school-master, had a son of about Benjamin's age. This son had been wrought into a good mathematician, and sent to Cambridge, where he came out as a senior "op." Before taking orders, which was his destination, he had come home to spend a little time with his family;

and the club, unsolicited, had shown its sense of the credit which he had brought to Wetton by electing him a member. Now this young Coryton (or Carryten as they were commonly called, partly from ignorant corruption of the name, and partly from the frequency of carrying ten in the old gentleman's instructions) was a sort of link between Benjamin and the club. They had played in the Wetton gutters together, stolen apples in concert, been, under a common sentence, wellnigh flayed (for old Carryten generally left his mark upon offenders, and didn't spare his own flesh), and were still great friends. Ben was not aware of having reflected credit on his native place except by his appearance and general style; but in every other respect he might aspire to the club as well as Coryton. He thought, too, it would only be reasonable of his friend to propose him, and so he asked him to do him that favour. Coryton, although he could do anything with figures and quantities short of squaring the circle, was very much Benjamin's inferior in point of assurance. He would have preferred at most times not to put himself forward in the affairs of the club; but, elected as he had been, and that very recently, he saw a peculiar impropriety in attempting to introduce another member from his own stratum of society. Thus he was made excessively uncomfortable by Benjamin's request, and hardly knew how to answer it. "Look here, Ben," he said, after some hesitation; "don't fancy, old chap, that I wouldn't be delighted to have you a member, because I would, and you ought to know that I would; but you know I doubt if my bringing you forward would be the best means to insure success. Your chance of election would be much better if your name were put up by one of the older members."

"Perhaps so; but who, except yourself, is likely to do it for me? Why, dash it, Tom, you're as good a member as any of 'em, and have just as much right to propose a candidate."

"Let that be granted," answered the senior "op;" "still, proposing is a different thing from electing. Say that I enter your name, I must have a coefficient, a seconder, you know,—and who will he be? If they take offence, and look upon me as an irrational quantity presuming on the favour they have shown me, we shall never make the proposal binomial: that is, my boy, we shall not get the two names necessary for candidature, far less shall we command the series that will secure election."

The impetuous Benjamin could not help seeing some reason in this, but he did not choose at once to acknowledge it, and he vented his vexation as if he had still to complain of Coryton's indisposition to help him. "By George!" he said, flinging away his cigar impatiently, "it seems a fellow might just as well be without a friend as have one."

"That is as much as to say that to have and not to have is the same thing, which is absurd. Given your friend, he is a unit, and valuable in his degree; but the problem is to find a multiplier that shall make you friends of the body of the club, and I don't, at this moment, see my way to the solution of it. What do you say to consulting my father? Father'll tell us what we had best do, and will help an old scholar if he can."

"Humph," replied Benjamin; "of course I've no objection to consulting the old gent, if I can only get him in a favourable humour."

"Well, then, Ben, he is likely to be expanded and raised to the *n*<sup>th</sup>



power of graciousness to-morrow evening, when the tradesmen's club are going to present him with a snuff-box; catch him after that, and he'll be cleared of fractions and surds, and prepared to be dealt with by any process that you like."

"I'm a member of *that* club," responded Ben, "and can go if I like." (He didn't like, though.)

"Then go by all means. I shan't be there, because I don't belong to 'em. But you, being homologous, should attend and do him honour; when he's radiant, extract his opinion, and obtain his goodwill."

"All right," said Ben; and he went to give notice that he would be at supper. But Tom Coryton went to meet his father, who would be then just on his way home from the schoolhouse, to talk to him about this embarrassing matter. Tom was in high favour after having taken so good a degree, as may be supposed: the old gentleman's countenance brightened at the sight of him; he got a favourable hearing for his little trouble, and was, moreover, gratified by his parent's entire approval of the manner in which he had met Mr Saunders's request.

"Right, Thomas, right: everywhere but here you are Mr Coryton, the Bachelor of Arts, and high-class mathematician; and here, too, I hope, my son, you'll some day hold up your head with the best of 'em. But just now people won't forget that your old father is the writing-master, and they'd look down upon you for that if you were the head of a college. Wait a little; you'll be a clergyman before long, and I shall be out of your way. Then they'll forget about your origin, and be ready enough to recognise you."

"Don't talk that way, father, please," entreated Tom. "I don't want to be anything grander than you and mother, and I don't wish for any worship or any station where

you can't be a witness, and where we shan't all be on the same level, just as we are now."

"You'll feel otherwise by-and-by, perhaps, my son," answered old Carryten, who was nevertheless touched by Tom's honest feeling. "But about Ben Saunders, now; I would lend him a hand for his old father's sake, if I knew how. I'll think about it. Pity that Ben isn't pleasanter. He wishes for people's good opinion, I'm sure, but he doesn't go quite the way to get it. I'll think it over, Tom, I'll think it over, my son." And Tom knew very well that his father's interest was gained for his friend.

It was a fortunate thing for young Saunders that he was induced to attend the tradesmen's meeting. A very unfavourable impression would have been given if, on this first meeting of the society after his father's death, and on this opportunity of doing honour to his old schoolmaster and his father's friend, he had absented himself, as he certainly had intended to do; for he thought that now when he was resolved to move on a higher level, the less he had to do with the old low level the better—which, I am afraid, was no proof of his fitness for social promotion. At all events, there he was, and nobody had a right to suppose that he didn't come with all his heart. The members, all in their simple way, evinced sympathy with him, and he was asked to be one of the half-dozen picked members who stood out to receive old Carryten, the guest of the evening. Ben was rather pleased that he had come. He couldn't help being friendly when everybody was so cordial; and I fancy that he made himself very agreeable, pulling out a cigar when they were all taking their pipes, and damning the infernal punch, which he said was made with

British rum and rotten lemons—not being considered ill breeding, but rather a proof of familiarity with the *beau monde*.

The presentation of the snuff-box was done by the president, a jolly old hardware man, who, in tendering the gift and proposing old Carryten's health, didn't try to be a bit fine, but spoke up just as he would on any ordinary night; and, prompted by a full and honest heart, was very effective. "We are wishful," said the chairman in the course of his address, "of showing our regard and esteem for a gentleman, an old friend, who has been amongst us now more 'n thirty year—ay, more 'n thirty year (for the time shoots away). There isn't but one or two in the room besides me can mind his coming, but every one in the room 'll say 'twas a fortunate thing he did come. To the older ones he has proved an honest and kind friend, and the younger have learned to respect him as an instructor so well as to love him as a friend, for there isn't one under thirty but have passed under his hand." (Great applause and drumming on the table at this last remark, Mr Saunders contributing liberally to the noise.) "Thewse that cried loudest wasn't, I believe, always they that got beat the hardest, though, perhaps, they wanted it the most." (Mr Saunders silenced. Cheers from quarters that had been quiet before.) "Well, as I was saying, young and old have good reason to respect and valley him, independent of what we as a body feel. But it is as the clerk of this club that we are now regarding of him—a club that has been prospering for more than twenty year, and a club that, I may safely say, never would have prospered, nor never would have lasted to this day at all, if it hadn't been for the good management, and

good sense, and good feeling of our friend what I am speaking of. Mr Carryten, sir, in the name of the club, which feels greatly beholden to you, I request you to accept of this box, a trifle in itself, but a weighty matter if you take account of all the hearty goodwill that we give 'long with it. May you live many, many years, sir, to make use of this small present, and may every new year find you increased in prosperity and in public estimation." The speaker then made a graceful allusion to the honours acquired by Mr Tom Coryton, and drank to the health and prosperity of Mr Coryton and family.

Old Carryten's hand trembled a good deal as he received the box, and he spent some time looking over it and admiring it, and then expressing his admiration of some of its workmanship, and of the gracious inscription, to those who sat next him, while the whole company hemmed and blew their noses and fidgeted until he should get on his legs, which he was in no particular hurry to do.

"A man severe he was, and stern to view;  
I knew him well, and every truant knew."

That was true enough; but then he wasn't always severe and stern, and he wasn't always stern when he was severe. I have known him sometimes, when taking the rind off a young gentleman's loins (for, bless you, we were not squeamish about a little excoriation in those days), convulse his pupils—the subject of his discipline excepted—with irresistible jokes. And, when he was clear of the school altogether, it was astonishing what good company he could be, what fun there was in him, what capital stories he could tell. He had a fair tenor voice, too, though it had begun to crack by this time, and was commonly asked for a song or two on festive occa-



sions. He was certainly not liable in a general way to be overcome by his feelings ; but somehow, on this occasion he not only postponed as long as he could the acknowledgment of the flattering gift, but when he did get up, he took refuge at first in a little fun. "Gentlemen," said he, "I have been in the habit of giving boxes for many ears, but never till this year has a box like this been given to me." This brightened the whole company again in a moment ; there was scarcely a pair of ears among them that didn't tingle at the *jeu d'esprit*. The laughter was loud, and the applause very hearty. The merriment had a composing effect on the speaker, who, being quite in his element, spoke of his early acquaintance with Wetton, and told one or two of his very best stories, with voice imitations, about some of the local characters. Though this was very effective, and delighted his audience, he knew very well that he was only postponing the dreaded response to the genial old hardware-man's gracious personalities. It had to be made, however, and as soon as he got on that subject, it was evident that he would, even in the presence of his old scholars, betray a weakness most derogatory to the character which he had hitherto maintained among them. He made two or three acknowledgments, very feebly, and in a somewhat broken voice ; took a pinch of snuff and a sip of punch ; went at it again ; got out one or two sentences with great gulps in them ; and at last old Carryten broke down utterly and ignominiously, subsided into his seat and covered his eyes with his hands, while the table rang with plaudits, Kentish fire, the jingling of glasses, and finally a very boisterous performance of the chorus, "For he is a jolly good fellow." Poor old Carryten ! perhaps if more kindness had

come his way before, more expression of feeling might have come out of him ! But how could that have been, I should like to know ? To all of my generation, and to all our mothers, who saw our welts and bruises, he was the very impersonation of cane and rod. He has cut the buttons from my jacket aforetime, and sent me to my seat with my shirt sticking to my back. All admitted that he would drive knowledge into any mind whatever capable of receiving it, and I suspect that Maga's compositors have been indebted to him for the legible MSS. of more than one contributor ; but it has taken a long life to raise in my mind a suspicion even that any feeling softer than fear and obedience would have been acceptable from his scholars. And yet, when I come now to think of that night at the tradesmen's club, and the old fellow's emotion, it strikes me that he may have had a sense of a hard and laborious life devoted to duty according to his lights, with mighty small material reward, and with only the consciousness that he was useful in his generation to support him ; also, that deep down in his breast, under the stony and scarifying strata, lay a yearning for an encouraging word or two, for some small appreciation of the devotion which kept him like a mill-horse for ever at his grinding labour.

Well, everybody was affected, and, fortunately for Mr Saunders, it was his allotted duty to break the awkward silence by rising to propose the health of Mrs Coryton. The subduing influence of the recent scene kept him within bounds, and he made his little speech very nicely, and was rewarded by a glance out of old Coryton's eyes such as he had never before seen proceeding from those organs. They finished the evening very merrily : the school-

master wrung everybody's hand at parting; and when Saunders offered his company on the walk home it was graciously accepted. In that auspicious quarter of an hour the young man opened his mind.

"I don't think," said the old gentleman, "that it would be well for either you or Tom, Benjamin, that he should be your proposer,"—and he gave reasons for this opinion similar to those which Tom had given. "But," added he, "perhaps if Tom can't manage it, I can. I assure you we both desire to serve you,—he an old friend, I an old scholar; and, provided you obtain your wish, I don't suppose you mind exactly by what agency the thing is worked. Leave it to me. And now, good night: I hope the evening has been as pleasant to you as it has been to me."

Ben knew that old Carryten wouldn't talk in that way unless he saw his way pretty clearly to attainment; but how he was to pass a not quite eligible friend into a society of which he wasn't himself a member wasn't quite apparent. He went to sleep, however, very tranquilly upon the assurance which he had received, but before doing so, had very much fortified his resolution to realise the dream.

We will not follow old Carryten through his negotiations on Benjamin's behalf. There might be some amusement in doing so, but it would carry us too far from the trunk-line of our story. His mode of operating was this. There were in Wetton, as there are in most places, certain gentlemen who managed to participate in the amusements and indulgences that were to be had there, without being as remarkable for prompt payment as for prompt fruition. Such as these, one may be sure, were in the club, and were its most regular attendants; and they were also in the

books of a good many tradesmen, whom to reconcile to the system of small profits and slow returns was a feat which they all achieved with more or less brilliancy, though sometimes at the imminent risk of being "*taken* by the insolent foe." Now, the schoolmaster, from his long intimacy with Saunders's affairs, knew pretty well who they were that stood indebted to the estate. He knew also that some of the debtors were of the free-and-easy class which I have just mentioned. He contrived to let a few of them know that the books of the estate were likely soon to be put in the hands of a man of business, with a view of clearing off all old scores, and starting afresh under the new owners. He likewise hinted at Mr Benjamin Saunders's ambition to be elected a member of the worshipful society known as the Wetton Club; whereat these exclusive aristocrats laughed scornfully, asked if he didn't wish he might get it (which was then considered a smart form of speech), and remarked, that though the club had got deuced low, yet, by Jupiter! it hadn't quite come down to that yet. The better part of their nature, however, prevailed, when they perceived that to do Saunders a kindness might secure for the doer of it exemption from the pressure that was to be apprehended; and two or three of these genial fellows, after putting aside the crabbed air with which they first pretended to meet the proposal, entered heartily into the design, and even vied with each other in showing their zeal for it. These were really the ruling members of the club, who were there continually, fussing and complaining and managing. They knew how to beat about and get promises not to oppose; also how to bring on the election at a favourable time. In short, they carried in their man;



and though a good many independent members raged and stormed afterwards, yet, as the rules had in a fashion been complied with, they were given to understand that it was their own fault that they didn't attend and black-ball. It ended in growling only, and the growling died away, and Mr Benjamin Saunders had his foot on the ladder.

This step achieved, our hero of the dream followed it up by dissociating himself more and more from the business, except the office part thereof, and by being seen now and then out with the harriers on a good-looking horse. Through his exhibitions of himself on the outside of this same horse arose a little adventure, which he looked upon as arranged by the good genius who had sent him the dream, but which did not seem so fortunate to the other actors in it as it did to him. He was out on the road one afternoon, when he met a drayman who was conveying two huge logs of timber to his building yard. The logs were lashed on to a rest formed by timbers, which were supported by the axles of two pairs of immense wheels, such as the reader has often seen used in a similar way. Benjamin stopped the drayman, to whom he had something to say; but his steed fidgeted so at the neighbourhood of the tall wheels that it was a difficult matter to converse, and a good deal of time was lost through the animal edging away, and then being forced up again. While this little scene was going on, a lady on horseback hove in sight, as the Admiral would have said, and came on at a canter towards the dray. When she was near enough to be distinguished, the youth saw that it was Miss Fulford; upon which recognition he coloured very much, ceased to attend to the man, and patting and soothing his horse, tried to make it stand

quiet while the young lady passed. But the rapid approach of another horse is not calculated to make a horse already restive remain motionless. His plunged and sidled more and more, but did not prevent him from showing the efforts he was making to subdue these capers, nor from raising his hat as the young lady passed. Whether Miss Fulford knew him or not was not clear; but she had reined in her horse to a walk as she came up to the unsightly vehicle, and, keeping to the side opposite to Benjamin and his gyrations, slightly inclined her head in acknowledgment of his salute; then, thanks to the steadiness of the beast which carried her, which did little more than prick his ears, she got clear of the obstruction, and stretched into a canter again. So far well; but her groom, who had not slackened his pace, and who attempted to dash past, was not destined to be so successful. The groom's horse shied wildly at the wheels, and, upon being pressed, made a sharp wheel with his fore legs in the air, which brought the rider off upon the top rail of a gate, across which he fell heavily, while the animal galloped off. By the time Saunders and the carter got up to him, he had fallen to the ground. The man could speak to them in gasps, but he was evidently severely shaken, and in great pain. Several of his ribs, he said, were broken. Now, it was a question what was to be done; for, after they had supported him into a sitting posture against the gate, and picked up his hat and replaced it upon his head, he said he could not sit upon Saunders's horse if he were lifted thereon. Then the drayman said he knew of no better plan than to make a bed of some hay which he carried with him for his horses, spread it on the logs, and let the poor fellow be

stretched upon it till they could reach a wayside inn about half a mile on. While they were by very slow motions raising him to this rude bed (for he was in great agony, and could hardly bear to be touched), Miss Fulford, who had missed her attendant and turned to see what had become of him, rode up.

"He'll go home safe enough, Miss; he won't come to no hurt," feebly moaned the poor man, in reply to her alarmed "Good heavens, Corder! what is this?"

"Dear me, never mind the horse; are you much hurt?"

"Feared I be, Miss."

Then Mr Saunders explained the manner of the accident, and what they proposed to do,—to which, as no alternative presented itself, she was fain to assent. He also said that he would ride forward to the little inn, send a more comfortable conveyance if he could get one, and order a bed to be prepared for the sufferer. Permitting him to do so, Miss Fulford said she would remain with the dray. A little way on, Saunders met a farmer returning in his tax-cart from town, and made him promise to turn back and bring up the injured groom when he should meet the dray. He then pricked on to the inn, called out the landlady, and told her to prepare a bed. It was some time before the tax-cart came up, for Corder could not bear to be driven at more than a slow walk. They lifted the patient carefully out, and promised to have him as tenderly undressed and put to bed till a doctor should arrive. Miss Fulford's intention had been to remain at the inn till a carriage could be sent for her; but a sight of the house showed this to be impossible. There were fellows drinking all over the place, and a decent sitting-room was not to be had. Saunders said that he would have been quite ready

to stay, but then Miss Fulford would have had to ride home alone; and, through the delay caused by the accident, it was getting late, and would be dusk before she could reach Colkaton. There was nothing for it but that Benjamin should attend her. If he would have taken the groom's place, and followed her at a distance, the arrangement might have been very well; but there was no chance of that. Benjamin thought that he would be able to lift her on to her horse; but she, too quick for him, went to the stock and swung herself into the saddle in a moment, earning a commendation from the ostler, who said, as he drew his hand across his upper lip after letting go her reins, "Yew be a lightsome one, Miss; darned if yew ban't. Yew oft to be in Powell's trewp, yew did. I've a seed heavier maidens that they thought wo'th puttin' into pantalewns." But it is a question whether this panegyric was not due entirely to the fear she was in of Benjamin touching even the sole of her boot. She had an instinctive perception that he was a person to be kept at a considerable distance. Ben, however, by this time quite understood the necessity of greatly restraining himself, and intended this time to make an impression by extreme deference, curbing his vivacious fancy. And when he got a chance of saying anything at all, he said nothing that any one could object to; but his chances were exceedingly limited, for Miss Fulford kept at something more than a canter wherever the ground permitted of it; and in a very short time they were in the outskirts of Wetton, and at the door of Mr Pound the Apothecary and Surgeon. That practitioner himself immediately appeared at the door of his pharmacy, and received directions, first, to go himself to see her servant



immediately; second, to send for a carriage for herself; third, to let one of his men lead her horse to Colkaton; fourth, to afford Miss Fulford the shelter of his house till the carriage should be ready. On the appearance of Pound's man she lighted off her horse, thanked Mr Saunders very impressively for the great trouble he had been at on her account, said she would not detain him another minute, and disappeared into the house. Thus, you see, she shook off her cavalier almost as soon as they were among the houses: Pound, the most prudent of pestle-drivers, would be sure to make no remark concerning her being so escorted: and so the whole annoying adventure would be at an end, with no gossiping body cognisant of it. But Gertrude reckoned without her host. Owing to the pace at which she had travelled, there was still plenty of light in the sky when she reached Wetton, and there was a pair of eyes in the window of the house opposite to Pound's, which in a moment perceived all the circumstances of the arrival. Old Mrs Yeo, the owner of the house, was infirm and purblind: she could seldom go to church, and she could not see to read; so she received a visit once or twice a-week from the vicar or his curate, who read to her, and gave her ghostly advice and comfort. Thus Mr Norcott was with her at this time, but the eyes I spoke of didn't belong to him—then. Moreover, Mrs Yeo was aunt—I believe I ought to say grand-aunt—to Miss Lydia Tarraway, and that young lady it was, who, having accidentally called in to see how her dear old aunty did, was the owner of the eyes in question. It was with the greatest difficulty that she suppressed an exclamation which would have been highly inopportune while the reading was going on.

“What can Gertrude Fulford be about?” said Lydia to herself. She perceived the manner of Saunders's dismissal, and guessed that the occurrence must have been accidental; at the same time she considered it only her duty to regard it as “strange.” Her feeling towards Gertrude was friendly rather than otherwise. She had quite retired from the Hardinge contest, since it was ascertained that the Lieutenant's days in Wetton were numbered, and that Norcott had an uncle, a bishop, and a cousin, in the House of Commons; for there would be many rivals in this quest also, and fine exercise for Lydia's talents. She did not imagine that there was the smallest chance of Gertrude's obtaining Hardinge's regard; but then why was Gertrude so silly and so vain as to fancy that she could captivate a man who was probably pre-engaged, and at any rate not going to lose his heart in Wetton? It must have been impatience at her friend's manifest folly, or else I know not what it was, that made Lydia feel quite a complacent glow when she saw the riders together at Pound's gate, and made her resolve with the severity of a censor that the matter might be the means of conveying a lesson against overweening pretensions. When Mr Norcott escorted her home in the dusk of the evening, she told him what she had seen.

“It must have been just an accidental meeting,” said the curate. “They must have come up at the same moment to speak to Mr Pound. People are always wanting something of him.”

“No,” said Lydia, “that wasn't it, I'm sure. I saw them ride into the town together, without doubt. What on earth can have brought them into company?”

“Oh, some odd chance or other. Is the thing worth noticing?”

"Not if Miss Fulford speaks of it herself. We shall see. Perhaps she will explain all about it. It is odd, isn't it?"

Miss Fulford, as we have seen, did not speak of the matter herself. She was annoyed at it having occurred, and she believed that nobody had noticed it; so she was glad to banish it from her thoughts. Mr Saunders, on the contrary, saw in this incident his good fortune working its way to the fulfilment of his desires. "To think now," said he to himself, "of my actually riding alone with her for three or four miles, and attending of her to the little inn! This is getting on at a great pace: she'll get over her shyness after a bit; if I should have the luck to meet her once or twice more. I'm awake." And he was silly enough to talk to one or two of his associates about having ridden with Miss Fulford, suppressing the circumstances to which the ride was due, so as to make them open their eyes wide and say to one another after he left them, "My eye! Ben's a gettin' on, isn't he? he'll be to court next; clever chap, Ben."

It was about this time that I sat, one evening, at a meeting of the club, apart on a sofa with the curate, neither of us caring to play cards. We were talking of the strange coincidences that happen in this world, and then it was that Norcott confided to me that curious story of Lieutenant Hardinge's dream. I thought it one of the most remarkable things I had ever heard, and said I should like to make a note of the particulars to keep by me. I knew the Plymouth Hotel well, and asked whether the curate could give the number of the room,

which he said was 26, Hardinge having once or twice named the number, as if impressing it on his own memory, and saying, "It's the number of the Cameronians: I shall recollect it by that." I observed that these foreshadowings, or warnings, or whatever they were, certainly passed our comprehension; when Saunders, who had been lounging opposite to us, apparently studying a sporting paper, jumped up at my words, and came across towards us, asking if we were talking about visions and prophecies, and what they were, as he took a deep interest in such matters. Of course we were not inclined to tell him of the story, to renew his grief, so the curate put him off by saying that we had been discussing a certain dream which had been remarkably and exactly fulfilled. "Fulfilled, eh?" answered he, little imagining what the subject of the dream was. "You know instances, then, of dreams having been exactly fulfilled: good. I have no doubt they come quite true sometimes. I could tell, if I liked, of a very odd dream that seems likely to come to pass, only they say you spoil all if you tell it." Of course I know now what was then in Mr Benjamin's mind.

Admiral Tautbrace was very fond of his garden. He understood gardening, and worked himself at it a part of most days on which he was free of engagements. He employed as his assistant a queer old fellow, who was quite a character in the neighbourhood,—observant, shrewd, droll after his fashion, and quick at repartee. Uncle\* Jack Varco — or old Plummybag, as he was profanely called, because "plum" means soft, as an air-cush-

\* I have met many countrymen who supposed that to call elderly people *Uncle* and *Aunt* was an American invention. Those who are acquainted with the southwestern peninsula of this island must know very well from whence the Americans derived the custom.



ion, risen bread, &c., and Uncle Jack had been afflicted with dropsy soon after his conversion—rejoiced in the reputation of having been somewhat of a reprobate in time past; but in my recollection he had been a saint—a liberal saint, that is, for he still enjoyed his joke, did not pull long faces, and was not particularly hard on his neighbours save in the way of sarcasm, to which he had always been addicted, even in his carnal days. The religious denominations down there in the west might say, as the evil spirits did, that their name is legion, for they are many. Uncle Jack's persuasion called itself *Brienite*, after one O'Brien, its founder. Sailors when on shore, I have observed, dislike constrained intercourse with inferiors (of which they have more than enough, perhaps, on the quarter-deck), and take to these privileged oddities, with whom they can be familiar without loss of dignity. The two were very busy one day among the beds, and Uncle Jack, having made mention of "Thicky there, Saunders's boey," as he irreverently termed our friend Benjamin, said, "What do 'ee think I heerd about en, then, sir?"

"Infernal young cub! how should I know? Well, what did you hear, Jack?"

"I should say before telling of it, that it didn't come from no reliable witness, and if there was only Tommy Triggs's word for it, I shouldn't ha' believed it."

"Who the Hades (?) is Tommy Triggs?"

"My dear, I'm afeard you've a named the very place where they could tell 'ee most about en. He's a fine carriter that there Tommy. Whupped he've a been, and caged and ironed, to say nothin' of a short visit to Buttiney Bay along of a hoss job. There's little he dothn't know."

"Rascal! and there's something else about him, Jack, that I know without your telling me."

"What's that, my dear?"

"Why, I'll answer for it that, with all those accomplishments, the fellow's been a Brienite preacher."

"Can't say, my dear, whe'er a was or not, or whe'er a had any religion at all. What I do know of en is that a was once the Cap'n of a man-o'-war: easier to onderstand that than his bein' of a preacher."

"Easier to onderstand that, you old villain! What the devil do you mean?"

"My dear, I knows nothin' of myself, how should I? but I've heerd say, perhaps ontruly, that some of 'em wull cuss and swear, and call names like troopers, and be guilty of much perfaneness: now that's exacly Tom Triggs's carriter."

"Hark ye, Uncle Jack, you'll do well to keep those sentiments for the shore; for I'll be" (something) "if you wouldn't get your old back well scored afloat if you talked in that impudent way."

"Likely I might. I've a been a-shipboard, and know somethin' of the doings."

"Convict vessel?"

"No, measter, no. What I've a seed hev been in a very humble way. I never persoomed to make out that us had a sailed together—me and Tommy, I means, of kewse."

"I daresay, bless you. But now about this rascal, this Mr Triggs."

"Well, this rascal, as you calls en—unfortunate sinner, as I calls en—was a drinkin' last Friday artemnoon to Hannah Sibley's, dree mile out upon the Slushton road, and he saith he seed Miss Gartude, you know, the young mistuss" (*winking, and pointing his finger over his shoulder towards Colkatton*)—

"He saw, and be dashed (?) to him!

Well, yes, yes; what did the fellow see?"

"I was agwain to tell 'ee, onny you stopped me. The fella said that he seed the young lady (dear sweet maiden her is, tew, I vow to gewdness)——"

"Get on, old man—go ahead, make sail, will you?"

"I wull, if you'll leave me to, except making sails, which I can't do; I wish I could. St Paul, you know——"

"Bless St Paul! You're doing this on purpose, you old rascal!" (Then, calming himself with a great effort)—"Now, I say, Uncle Jack, let's have it; that's a good man."

"My, my! I hope you'll be forgiven. Well, a said he seed Miss Gartrude out there a-ridin' with young Benny—onny they two."

"An infernal lying villain! How could you think of repeating such an infamous story?"

"Upon Tommy's word, sartainly, 'twasn't worthy to be tould again; but I understand the young sprig hisself hev a been sayin' somethin' of the same soart."

"He has, has he? Then he stands as good a chance of a rope's-endin as any man between the four seas. An impudent——" (*a few choice imprecations, the details of which are not suited to these pages*).

Immediately after the above conversation, the flag-officer, firing minute oaths, retired into the house, while old Plummybag let his countenance relax into a grin that might have belonged to a hearty laugh, but was not attended by any sound whatever.

As he doffed his garden dress, and rigged himself, as he called it, for town, it occurred to Admiral Tautbrace that his position in entering into judgment with Mr Saunders would be much strengthened if he had some accurate information as to the real facts. These

could be ascertained nowhere so well as at Colkatton; and he was glad of an excuse for calling there. Thither, accordingly, he first took his way; and there he found the ladies much out of sorts, the younger one especially so, who had learned from Miss Tarraway's innuendos rather than her words that she was acquainted with the adventure, and who had been made aware of this annoying fact at a time and in a company when and where it was impossible to reply or explain. Indeed Gertrude was greatly mortified and very angry. There was no need for the Admiral to beat cautiously about, for the ladies were only too glad to unburden themselves of their grief, and to tell him the whole story of the affair as it really occurred. He had heard of Corder's accident, but not of the attendant circumstances: now he understood the whole matter, and would take care that people whose opinion was worth anything should understand it too. Not knowing how Lydia had come by her imperfect information, he thought the whole gossip was owing to Mr Saunders's indiscreet boasting. So he took his leave, saying that he would go now and take steps for having a proper version of the tale put in circulation, and quietly intending to go also and administer a caution to the offender. He called on the clergyman of the parish, on the curate, and on one or two other persons, who possessed either local influence or long tongues, and gave the proper version of the story, not without inveighing against Mr Benjamin Saunders's idiotic vanity, and hinting at the retribution which was probably in store for him. Some of the persons whom he went to enlighten had never heard the story at all; but among those who had heard it was Mr Norcott, who felt himself guilty, not for having spoken of the subject,



or having even imagined that there could be anything in it worth speaking about, but because he had too quietly permitted Miss Tarraway to deceive herself (so the honest fellow put it) as to its having been other than one of the most simple of accidents. He never thought of blaming Lydia, to whose weaknesses he was getting particularly blind. The Admiral then took his way towards the large gates, over which were written on a great wooden arch that spanned the entrance, *Saunders, Stone-Mason, Bricklayer, Builder, and Contractor*, and stepped into the little office adjacent thereto, where he saw Mr Benjamin behind the desk, having some earnest business talk with a gentleman of the town who stood outside the same desk, and John Bray, the foreman, who was in attendance. On observing who it was that darkened the doorway, Ben came smirking forward, requested the Admiral to take a seat, and he would have the pleasure of taking his orders in a very few minutes: but the Admiral said there was no hurry; he had a short business to do elsewhere, and would return; so he went out again, rather to Ben's disappointment, who thought perhaps he might forget to call again, or be prevented from doing so. There was, however, no danger of his forgetting; only as he had now ascertained that Mr Saunders was within his reach, which he had feared might not be the case, he thought he would take a turn or two outside, measure the young man's offence, and consider how he should be dealt with. Some people would have looked into these little matters before seeking the delinquent, but that was not the Admiral's way. A little reflection showed him that Ben had been guilty of only indiscretion, or at the worst of a suppression of the truth, and that he had been indulging his vanity

without any bad intention. He therefore did the great violence to his feelings of putting aside the idea of rope's-ending. "No," said he to himself, enjoying the consciousness of his clemency, which he didn't think ten men in the whole service would have the magnanimity to imitate—"No, by George (?), I'll only give the whelp a little wholesome advice; speak to him like a father this time, and if that doesn't do——" he didn't finish the sentence, but closed his fist upon his baton, and made it quiver a little in his grasp.

"Ah, are you disengaged now, youngster?" inquired he, as he entered the office the second time. Benjamin rubbed his hands, and said he was quite at the Admiral's orders, again offering a seat.

"Then just let your mate or whatever he may be go forward—get out of this, I mean—for I want to say a few words to you in private."

John Bray raised his eyebrows at this, and thought it looked mysterious; he took his departure, however. Ben began to experience a disagreeable sensation, as if this pointed to a different kind of business from what he had expected.

"Now look you, my friend," began the Admiral. "I understand that your good fortune—your *devilish* good fortune, mind you—caused you to render a small service the other day to a young lady whose groom met with an accident. *You know.*"

Ben's apprehension turned suddenly to delight. Could the Admiral possibly have come as an ambassador to open negotiations that might lead to the fulfilment of the dream? This did indeed look promising. Ben simply bowed in acknowledgment that he had done his *devoir*, as imputed.

"Then don't interrupt me, sir. Zounds, I say, sir, don't interrupt

me. You've been lubber enough to speak of your ride home as if it hadn't been the result of an accident, but something in the way of your ordinary privilege, haven't you? (*faint effort on Mr Saunders's part to say something in mitigation.*) Not a word, sir—not a word; you know you did. Now my first impression, when I heard of this, was that it was impertinence, and, by George, sir, if—(*movement of dissent from Mr Saunders*)—well, I am willing to believe that it was not impertinence, only folly, blest folly, which perhaps you were not aware of; I hope not. But now that I've made you understand what an ass you are, what an idiotical conceited puppy you are justly called, I trust it will operate as a caution to you as long as you live, not to speak of gentlewomen except with the profoundest respect—the profoundest respect, do you hear?"

"Really, Admiral Tautbrace,"—Ben was beginning in an indignant strain.

"Silence, sir; don't attempt to answer. If I'd ordered you four dozen—that is, I mean, if you'd been severely trounced (you understand me), there might have been some reason for singing out, although men of any mettle are not given to bleating under punishment; but I've chosen to deal with this case mildly—by yea and nay, mildly. Good day, sir; good day. I hope I shan't have to repent of my humanity. Don't drive me to be a savage against my nature."

As the Admiral strode out of the office, striking his stick upon the floor, uttering from his nostrils breath that was red-hot if it had not burst into flame, and looking the very picture of mild benevolence, he came against John Bray in the porch, who didn't appear to have

withdrawn himself to any great distance. John sprang out of the path of the meek old sailor as if the latter had been a steam-engine at full speed, and presently re-entered the office, where he found his chief greatly disconcerted, and not a bit soothed by the suspicion that his foreman had overheard the—no, *not* the dialogue.

"That be a limb,\* ben't a?" said John, as he came in. "Soart uv a chap now, that ef he wus upun the one side uv a hadge I wud sewnder be upun the tether; speak'th to we like as ef us was brewt beastisses, doan't a?"

"An old man, John," answered Ben. "People have spoiled him by humouring of him. I was half a mind to serve him properly, and let the daylight through him. Bless him, the old tyrant, but I don't think he meant half that he said, you know. If I'd punished him for his hectoring, the old fool, I should have been sorry afterwards, perhaps."

"Es, I reckon yew wew'd," replied John.

Ben, be it remarked, was not thought to be deficient in courage; it was want of sense and judgment that put him wrong. His father, if the old Admiral had tried to bully him, would have met the assault quietly but firmly, and in the end got the better of the peppery old sailor. But Ben, although he may have been up to hitting out, had no other resource, and personal violence; he instinctively felt, was not the right thing in this place. It was an attack against which he was not prepared with any defence. He felt rather guilty, too, being aware that he had made his remarks in such a way as not to convey exactly the whole truth; and yet, indeed, nothing that he said would have

\* To wit, of Satan.



been much noticed by any one if his words had not been so ably supported by those of Miss Tarraway. Well, here he was in another mess, and snubbed again. He couldn't think how it was, that while some influence or other seemed to be intent on forwarding the fulfilment of his dream, some other unlucky chance brought him, out of each opportunity, mortification and discouragement.

Many people may think that the Admiral had much better have omitted his interview with Mr Saunders. Such, however, was by no means his own opinion. Satisfied that he had done his duty, and rather proud of the calm and temperate manner in which it had been done, he took his way homewards, and thought he would look in again at Colkaton to assure the fair inhabitants that everything had been put right. He felt himself now to be commissioned in some sort as Gertrude's champion, to be wearing her favour; "and, sink me," said he to himself, "I should like to see one of these waltzing, galloping young humbugs that could dispose of a bit of business of that kind like an oldster who has some comprehension of discipline, by George!" He reported in few words the outlines of his proceedings, more to let Gertrude observe his zeal than in the way of boasting; said that all annoyance about the matter might be suffered to die away now, as he was certain that he had quite put an end to misapprehensions; received his meed of thanks, and then, like a prudent mariner, thought he would clap on all sail while the wind was fair. Accordingly, he led the conversation to his own affairs, and, with subtilty adapting his remarks to Mrs Fulford's tastes rather than her daughter's (as he who would be master of the body of the place knows that he must first win the

outworks), mentioned an interview which he had had with the "sea lord" on his recent visit to the Admiralty.

"Fine fellow, Tom Mainsplice, and, I may say, not ill disposed to your humble servant—sailed together you know; taking of Martinique—Tom's arm broke—I shot through calf of my leg; that sort of thing. He'll do me a good turn, rely upon it, if he can."

"Oho! you expect promotion, Admiral. Well, I hope with all my heart it will not be long delayed. What shall you be—a field-marshal?" said Mrs Fulford.

"Promotion! not a bit of it. That's all right: goes by seniority, you see, now. I've been of the white two years and a half, and must be of the red soon, if the old ones go off as they are doing at present. Poor Sir Davy Dreadnought, only last week; good-service pension—one leg, and reef in right side from sabre-cut in boarding. Two or three just before him. No, I wasn't speaking of promotion; but Mainsplice gave me a whisper about the South American command being vacant shortly, and he hinted that possibly, he couldn't say for certain, mine might be one of the names submitted for it."

"Oh yes; and then, if your name were submitted?"

"If I were *selected*, you know, my flag would go up."

"Really, your flag would go up," repeated Mrs Fulford, intensely interested, and understanding the matter of which she spoke as well as if it had been mentioned in Sanskrit. "Then you will have to get it down again!"

"No, Heaven forbid—no; if I get it up, I'll keep it flying, trust me. Sending up my flag, ma'am, means getting a command; taking my berth on board a *flag-ship*—d'ye understand?"

"Oh, I see ; of course, of course." (The Misses Tautbrace were rather better up in this subject than Mrs Fulford. The possible ascent of this flag was the constant topic of conversation when the family was alone, and came to them as regularly as their daily bread, though, I fancy they prayed less earnestly for it.)

"Well, don't you think it looks promising?" asked the Admiral.

"Oh, most hopeful—almost certain, I should say. Of course, you reminded your friend Maysplice——"

"Mainsplice, ma'am, Mainsplice. Name that was in everybody's mouth in Jervis's days. Commanded 'Untameable Hyæna' off Cape St Vincent."

"Of course, I meant Mallspice ; the king gave him a bath, or something, I remember. Well, you reminded your friend Mallspice, now, of that glorious, glorious conflict, of that dreadful wound in your arm?"

"Leg, ma'am, leg—and not so dreadful, neither ; not even entered *severe* in doctor's report. No, Tom knows all about that, and the First Lord wouldn't know or care much about it if it was told to him. I'll tell you what I reminded him of, though ; I said he must recollect that I had always voted straight since that little matter was put right about the Finisterre's prize-money ; and that they'd have returned one of those confounded prying, grumbling, arithmetical rascals for Wetton last election, if I hadn't prevented it. I hinted, too, that if I was left too long ashore, I might, in a moment of forgetfulness, plump for the wrong man. *That* will give me a capital chance if Tom represents it properly."

"What ! a better chance than the memory of your services and sufferings !"

"A blessed—(I beg your pardon, ladies)—a confounded sight better."

What occurred to poor Gertrude on this occasion was, that if Tom Mainsplice should only be duly impressed by his friend's merits, she might be delivered from the importunities of a suitor who was becoming troublesome, and was in the present circumstances, particularly distasteful. But another thing had taken hold of Mrs Fulford's mind, which had never before opened to the great possibilities of Admiral Tautbrace's position in the service—possibilities which, though they surrounded him now in only an incorporeal and invisible state, might any day be clothed upon and take gorgeous shape. Once she conceived the new idea, she didn't do so in an imperfect way, but saw Tautbrace full-blown as Port Admiral at Plymouth. She had been at the Admiralty House there, and seen the glories of the appointment ; and to think that Admiral Tautbrace, her friend and neighbour, might be invested with these or similar glories if only Tom Mainsplice should prove an effectual advocate ! She didn't know how Tom Mainsplice, and other Toms, Dicks, and Harrys, had been playing fast and loose with the Admiral for the last seven or eight years—always holding out hopes, and always finding some excuse for not realising them !

"Jack," said the Admiral to old Plummybag next morning in the garden, "I gave a word of caution yesterday to that jackanapes, that young what's-his-name."

"Saunders's boey do 'ee mean?"

"Yes ; the fellow's father was a respectable man, so I thought I wouldn't be so sharp as I intended, but speak to him mildly, as a parson or one of those people would."

"He isn't a used to sich tenderness as that. Should'n wonder now ef a never seed 'twas lovin'-kindness at all. Folks be so contrary."

"That may be, Jack ; I've often



and often found that the case, but I've got used to it, and don't expect anything better. A man that expects to be appreciated will be disappointed. It's a bad world, old man—a dashed ungrateful world."

"All ignorance, my dear; they doesn't knaw when they'm a spoke to in that pleasant way that 'tis all for their own good."

After this occurrence the spring advanced at Wetton without incident worthy of special mention, although time was, of course, preparing events and surprises. As to the characters in this narrative, they were quietly working away, or being borne, towards their destinies. Lieutenant Hardinge was making the most of the days that remained of his country sojourn, sporting, visiting, but not making love, I am afraid. The young fellow went to Colkaton now and then with a mind perfectly easy as to the terms on which the acquaintance there was maintained, and never for an instant suspecting the flushes, tremors, palpitations, meditations, and tears to which his visits—nay, his looks, words, and gestures—gave rise. Although he had disappointed the matrimonial expectations of Wetton, he was there regarded as an unaffected, good-natured, rather pleasant fellow. His want of liveliness was set down to a reflecting mind and professional study. "A fine honourable young fellow, and a thorough soldier, I can assure you," was the testimony regarding him of the doctor of the militia, who, except for the three weeks during which the regiment was occasionally embodied, practised in the town as an ordinary surgeon, and assumed, and was allowed, to be the highest resident military authority. Hardinge had come short of the stereotyped country town idea of a young officer, all dash, brilliancy, and extravagance, and so rather disappointed

the place at his advent; but when the time of his departure approached, Wetton found that it was sorry to lose him. Miss Tarraway, having obtained satisfactory testimonials of Mr Norcott, and ascertained that two of his cousins were members of Parliament (one of them a small official), also that he had a bishop for his uncle by marriage, and that there was a living in the family, no longer confined herself to tentative operations, but formally invested that young man, and sat down before him, assailing him vigorously with all the weapons of which the attack was in that day cognisant. But some innocent objector may remark, "How could curates be attacked in those days? There was no confession, no decorating of churches at all seasons of the year, no working of altar-cloths, no embroidering of stoles, no prostrations, no choirs, no schools even, calculated to aid such designs!" Thou fool; presumest thou in thy small scale of sense to weigh thy opinion, founded on the experience of a few years probably—of a generation at the most—against the eternal instincts of spinsterhood expectant here on earth? Because the modern method of operating was not applicable to those days, is that a reason why there should have been no operation at all? If a modern curate in his raffish wideawake, his starched band, his bombasine waistcoat, and his straight-cut surtout, got up in imitation, as far as he dares, of a Popish priest, be, in that he is a bachelor, an object of competition, why should not an ancient curate have been equally so, although *his* ambition was to form himself upon the model of a Methodist preacher? Know well, that this relation is not for an age but for all time, and that wheresoever a curate (unencumbered) is, there will gentlewomen of a certain type be gathered

together. In the days of Miss Tarraway's youth Dissent was prevalent in the West of England, and zealous young clergymen beholding this result supposed it to be produced by something effective in the snuffle, the whine, the uncompromising doctrine, the exceeding plainness of worship, of attire, and of speech; and they too being ambitious of winning souls, governed themselves accordingly, as our officials have it. They probably were not aware that the popularity of the Dissenters was simply a measure of the unpopularity of the Church of England in those parts, as represented by its older and beneficed clergy. Those last-named public-spirited ministers had perceived that the people were in danger of becoming comparatively indifferent to field-sports, and of abandoning some flagrant vices, if by the influence of both precept and example such lapses were not prevented. To arrest the falling away, they, the clergymen, devoted themselves, hearts and souls, to following and recommending the sports, and practising the vices, so that men could see their works. The stiff-necked parishioners, instead of walking in the way of their pastors, ran after the Dissenters, rather to show how little feeling they had in common with their own clergy, than because ranting and howling and cushion-thumping were to their liking. But the rising generation of parsons naturally enough supposed that there was something positively attractive in the Dissenting style when so many seemed to approve it; and so they vied with each other in simplifying their churches, their services, and their attire, and in debasing their style of preaching. Lydia's leading move, which we may call the preparation for her attack, was a general intimation that she was "becoming serious." She adopted a bonnet which projected about three

inches beyond the point of her nose, withdrew a good deal from carnal amusements, attended meetings of the Bible and other benevolent societies, took great interest in missions, and was deeply affected at some passages in Norcott's sermons, which forced her to raise her eyes to the preacher, unconscious of the fact that they were running over. She likewise discovered a great passion for art, especially for oil-paintings. But I wish it to be understood that Lydia did not start off suddenly from her old path to walk in wisdom's ways. It was done gradually and cleverly, so that by-and-by, when the time had come for her timidly to seek spiritual advice from the curate on one or two points, there was nothing in her doing so to excite suspicion. Lydia did, moreover, some noble deeds of charity; and although her right hand was profoundly ignorant of the benefactions of her left, and *vice versa*, the secrets of both palms somehow were revealed to Norcott. When a young clergyman begins to think of matrimony, it is comfortable to know that the object of his regard is already very much what in his opinion a clergyman's wife ought to be! There was a nice docility, too, about Lydia; she was willing to be guided by the opinions of a person whom she respected. Her features were expressive certainly, and she managed their play with great judgment. It was only lately that Norcott had become alive to the fact that her eyes when lighted up by the soul within were perfectly splendid. But I am saying rather too much about this courtship. Poor Gertrude was decidedly out of health, lost her fresh look and her rounded form: the kind inquiries to which she was subjected vexed her, and struck a chill to her mother's heart. Pound had prescribed and supplied some



abominable mixture which he called a tonic, also a box of pills. The two together were enough to produce serious disease in a healthy person, and to hurry a patient towards the grave. One or two friends, more clear-sighted than the apothecary, recommended an excursion, which he never would have suggested; but of this Gertrude wouldn't even hear at present, though she thought perhaps she might be more disposed to travel in the summer. I don't know what odd fancies didn't occur to her now. Protestant nunneries were beginning to be heard of; and she thought she would like to start a little society of *sisters of the broken heart*, or something of that sort, who would do an incalculable deal of good, and be a real blessing to mankind. She wasn't quite clear what their line would be, but she had nearly made up her mind about the bonnet of the order, a sketch of which lay for long between the leaves of her blotting-book. And even yet, that stupid fellow Hardinge would sometimes, by a thoughtless word or action, dispel for a time all the resignation, and renew the whispers of hope, even if the whispers were so low as to be almost inaudible. Admiral Tautbrace, having perceived that the mention of the flag had not been without its effects on Mrs Fulford, took care to refer very frequently to that piece of bunting and its prospects. It had not "gone up" yet, and it had grieved Tom Mainsplice to the heart to say that the First Lord had been compelled (much against his private inclination) to bestow the South American command on another officer whose claims it was impossible to overlook. (Mainsplice did not mention that this deserving officer could influence three votes in the House of Commons; and that the last division, on a question of confidence,

had been what he called a (something) near thing, by George!) Tautbrace, however, would be borne in mind, and something else would be sure to turn up before long. You couldn't call Tautbrace by any means an old man, Mrs Fulford thought—he still possessed all the energy of youth; whatever his years were, was ready to take a command at a day's notice, was most distinguished in his profession, and would certainly have a title some day. (This last idea the Admiral had cleverly insinuated.) Of course, Mrs Fulford perceived that Tautbrace aspired to the honour of being her son-in-law; and although she rather hesitated about actively favouring his suit, she couldn't help reflecting sometimes that if things *should* take that turn, it might prove a tolerable dispensation.

Ben Saunders, more and more intent on effecting a rise in the world, and playing the great part assigned to him by fate, did not make himself more popular with people of his own class by his very openly exposed pretensions. He did not care much for that, though; for he found that fortune had been favouring him in more ways than he had till now been aware of—she had not only suggested a great ambition, but had bestowed some very important means of gratifying it. When the amount of the property left by his father came to be ascertained, it was found greatly to exceed the estimates of it made just after his death. The old builder had been industrious, shrewd, and frugal; his private expenditure had been a mere nothing in comparison of his income; consequently, year by year he had been accumulating money, which he had put out to increase here and there, always discreetly. The deposits and investments coming to light week by week

(for, as has been said, his accounts and memoranda were not of the most enlightening; moreover, his will disposed of his property in bulk almost) amounted to a handsome sum, the income derivable from which, added to the profits of the business, sufficed for a good deal of indulgence. Under pretence that his mother's spirits would never revive as long as memory should be kept awake by the daily sight of things connected with the past, Ben persuaded her to go for change of air and scene to a house situated some little way in the country, a very different residence from their old one. He announced it as a temporary arrangement, but they never returned to the old house near the building-yard. It need hardly be added, that with the new abode a new style of living was adopted, not in the best of taste, but comprehending indulgences never dreamt of in old days. Only under vehement protest did Mrs Saunders consent to these revolutions: if she had found herself as rich as Cræsus, she would have considered it a presumption for "the likes of her" to be "eatin' with a silver fork, made for show, and quite useless for pickin' up one's

fewd, besides woundin' of the gums and tongue; and trapesin' over rich carpets and amongst fine furnitur that a body dare not tech for fear of dirtyn' of 'em." This was very unlike the feeling of her son, who believed that nothing had been, or ever would be, so made as to be worthy of being used by him. He furthered his plans very much by giving expensive dinners to such young men as he could persuade to partake of them; and I think I recollect that many of those who declined his hospitality at first were wooed by the good report of the meat and drink, and by the advice that Ben lost money at cards like a lord at Crockford's. Like many another rising man, he became insultingly cool to some of his old friends. The distant and condescending salutation which he one day gave the militia sergeant-major, whose acquaintance he had in times past looked upon as his greatest social achievement, so wounded that gallant spirit, that he was fain to compose his mind by drinking steadily for three days and three nights, during which period he revealed to his familiars how "a dirty little puppy of a mechanic" ought to be treated.

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## THE ELECTIONS OF 1868 AND 1874.

THE Ashantee ambush has failed. When a night attack is repulsed, the results are commonly disastrous to the assailants. They retire in confusion, and during the stampede that ensues, arms are thrown away, discipline is neglected, and each man tramples upon his fellow. The Radical party have been utterly routed. They have lost their seats, they have lost their places, they have lost their heads, and they have lost their characters. The precipitate dissolution was avowedly a manœuvre,—one of those pious frauds which were practised by the Greek heroes and the mediæval priests, whose exploits are familiar to Mr Gladstone. It was well planned, and but for the vigilance of the enemy, might possibly have succeeded. The great majority of the boroughs were held by the Liberals, the great majority of the counties by the Tories. The borough elections take place whenever the writs are received, the county elections after a reasonable interval. Mr Gladstone's thunderbolt was launched on Saturday, January 24; on the following Friday the polling in the boroughs had begun, and in the course of another week it was completed. An immense advantage was thus afforded to the sitting borough members who were in possession, and more or less prepared for the fight. On the other hand, the Liberals had plenty of time to attack the Conservative strongholds in the counties,—to organise their forces and to select their men. We have no reason in either case to complain of the result: but it is plain that the Legislature should provide against the bare possibility of a successful *coup d'état*. A breathless and precipitate appeal to the constituencies

is entirely opposed to the spirit of the Constitution. There is something wrong in the state of the law which puts it in the power of any Minister to bring on a general election without fair and reasonable notice to the electors. The surprise in the present case was peculiarly unjustifiable. The isolated elections that had taken place for several years had uniformly been unfavourable to the Minister. Seat after seat had been secured by the Tories. But Mr Gladstone had declared that these elections could not be held to indicate the solemn and deliberate judgment of the electors upon his policy,—that could only be ascertained at a general election. And, to enable this solemn and deliberate judgment to be pronounced, what does he do? He causes Parliament to be called for the despatch of business: he virtually informs the members, who are scattered all over the world, that they need not return before the 5th of February; and then on the 24th of January, without an hour's notice, he goes to the country with a tempting bait in his hands, and throws himself upon the confounded constituencies.

To a certain extent—to what extent it is of course impossible to determine—it must be admitted that the *coup d'état* has proved a success. We are convinced that the discomfiture of the Liberal party would have been more complete had the dissolution been effected according to constitutional methods. There are numerous instances in which the sitting members for the boroughs won by a neck; and the chances are, that if the Tories had been allowed another week to organise, they would have secured a large number of these

seats. On the other hand, several places have been lost—Renfrewshire, Stroud, and Hull being the more notable—where within a few months the Gladstone candidates had been defeated. The only rational explanation that can be assigned for these suspiciously sudden somersaults is, that the virtue of the electors was not proof against the seductive bribe which the Minister offered for their acceptance. A Chancellor of the Exchequer who undertakes to sacrifice an odious tax on condition that he is retained in office has seized a powerful weapon, and we are not surprised that it should with certain industrial constituencies have proved quite irresistible.

In spite of all this, however, the great fact remains, that for the first time since the rupture of the party in 1846, the Tories have obtained a compact, decisive, and formidable majority. But the enormous significance of the victory cannot be adequately understood even by those who have won, until the figures are submitted to some sort of scientific analysis. "Votes must be weighed as well as counted," said Mr Gladstone in 1868, when vainly appealing to the electors of Lancashire; and the rare epigram is nearer the mark than many windier and wordier harangues. The election of 1874 must be taken in connection with the election of 1868, and with the great electoral reform which preceded that election; and when so regarded, it will clearly appear that *the victory of 1874 is not an isolated advantage nor an accidental surprise, but is directly and logically related to what many Tories regarded as the disastrous defeat of 1868.* Immediately after that election had been completed, we undertook to show that the moral and

permanent, as opposed to the numerical and momentary, issues of the campaign, were of most hopeful augury; and our sanguine anticipations and predictions have been abundantly justified.

Writing in December 1868,\* a period of gloom and discouragement, we observed:—

"The facts to which we have drawn attention should inspire confidence. They show that Toryism in England is strong in numbers, strong in wealth, and (this is the real force on which we rely) strong in conviction. Household suffrage in the populous towns, a £12 suffrage in the populous counties, have disclosed new sources of strength. The leap in the dark—a leap precipitated by the selfish and insincere manœuvres of the Whigs, who at the last were of all men the most reluctant to take the plunge—has landed us on solid ground. But there is need for patience and zeal, as well as ground for confidence. The Tory party is strong in defence, and time is on their side. Moderate men of all parties are becoming convinced that a destructive or merely negative policy, like that which Mr Gladstone has announced, cannot be a patriotic policy; but the moderate Radicals, well drilled in the lessons of party loyalty, have not yet had courage to leave the leaders under whom they have hitherto acted. At the same time, there is need for zeal and earnestness—such zeal and such earnestness as the men of Lancashire have shown. It cannot be concealed that the Volunteers of Scotland, the Roman Catholics of Ireland, have agreed to dismember the English Church; and (to neutralise their excessive and inordinate voting power in Parliament) a strenuous and persistent effort is demanded from English Churchmen. The struggle has been well begun; and we are convinced that when England is again appealed to, she will reply in quite unmistakable terms. One word more and we have done. To the first House of Commons elected under the Reform Bill of 1832 not

\* 'Blackwood's Magazine' for Jan. 1869; Art. "Gain or Loss?—The Statistics of the Campaign."



more than 140 Tory members were returned—mainly by the small constituencies which had been spared. The Tory members returned to the first Parliament elected under the Reform Bills of 1867-68 number not less than 275, and these represent the most powerful constituencies in the kingdom. This comparison, we think, conclusively establishes the wisdom of the Reform policy of Lord Derby and Mr Disraeli. No man in his senses can doubt that, in spite of Tory resistance, the Whigs would have ultimately succeeded in passing their £7, £6, or £5 franchise Bill, and that in that event the Conservative party would have been routed, as it was routed in 1832. We are convinced that to the prudent and courageous policy of 1867 we are indebted for results which, if not entirely satisfactory, are yet in many aspects eminently encouraging.”

The facts which we held to support this conclusion were elaborated at length in the Article to which we refer. It might be true that Scotland and Ireland were, for the time being, against us; but we were satisfied that the policy of the empire could not be permanently shaped by its outlying constituencies. On the other hand, the people of England had rallied round the Tory flag in a really remarkable fashion; Lancashire, of which Sir Robert Peel had said, “What Lancashire thinks to-day all England thinks to-morrow,” had come to the rescue; and the counties had been the scene of a great popular rising in defence of constitutional principles. Turning to a more exact examination of the election returns as they affected England, we were able to establish the following propositions:—

“1st, The Radicals gained a considerable proportion of the small boroughs—of those more particularly where the majorities fluctuate, going at this election with one party, at the next with their rivals, and where the issue is frequently decided by local or personal considerations. These boroughs, at this election, with few exceptions,

went over to the Radicals; but their adhesion cannot be considered any moral gain, seeing that the majorities were invariably very inconsiderable, and that these majorities, small though they were, cannot be credited with any decided political convictions. According to the theory of probabilities, most of these boroughs will at next general election be regained by the Tories. The occupation, indeed, of a number of unimportant positions, of no value in a strategic point of view, cannot exercise any decisive effect upon the ultimate issue of the campaign.

2d, The Radicals gained one or two of the greater boroughs—isolated positions of considerable strength—which had previously been held by the Tories.

3d, The Radicals succeeded in holding the metropolis, and the Tory attack was at most points repelled. But many of the positions were retained only after a desperate struggle, and the Tories established themselves in one or two strong and commanding positions. Here the balance of gain was undoubtedly on the side of the assailants. The metropolis and the country surrounding it is no longer a strict Radical preserve.

4th, The Tory attack upon the Yorkshire and North-Eastern boroughs was repulsed; but the Radicals retained many of those boroughs with difficulty, and their absolute majority under household suffrage has decreased.

5th, In the boroughs of Lancashire and the North-Western counties the Tories have repulsed the Radical attack by great majorities; they have gained several boroughs of the highest importance previously held by Radicals; and in the cases where their attack did not succeed, the Radical resistance has diminished.

6th, The Tory success in the counties has been decisive and overwhelming.”

These were the facts which in 1868, in spite of a great adverse majority, enabled us to look with confidence to the future. That future has arrived even more quickly than any of us could have anticipated, and we are now in a position to compare, as far as practicable in the limited time at our command,

the electoral campaigns of 1868 and 1874.

The general results may be very briefly stated. The House of Commons of 1868 originally consisted of 658 members. By the disfranchisement of certain boroughs, that number was reduced to 652. Of these, 270 were Tories and 382 were Radicals. During the existence of the last Parliament, the Tories gained 33 seats, and at the general election they gained 96—in all, 129. During the existence of the last Parliament, the Radicals gained 10 seats, and at the general election they gained 38—in all, 48. Thus since 1868 the net Conservative gain has been 81. If we add 81 to 270, we get the number of Tories in the new Parliament—351; the balance, consisting of Whigs, Advanced Liberals, and Home-Rulers, numbering 301. According to these figures, which must be very nearly correct, the Tory majority in the new Parliament is not less than 50. In 1868 the Tories were in a minority of 112.

These being the broad statistical results, the numerical gains and

losses of the elections, we proceed to examine them more closely, with the view of estimating their moral and political value in so far as they may be held to represent the comparative strength of Toryism and Radicalism in this country.

We must say a word, in the first place, upon the effect of the provision for the representation of minorities in the Reform Bill of 1867. This was perhaps the only part of his great measure which its author did not like. He publicly opposed it as alien to the spirit of the Constitution; and he may have privately felt that it was likely to prove injurious to the party which he led. The event has justified in this, as in many other instances, his political sagacity. It was a cause of loss to us in the election campaign of 1868, and that loss has been largely increased in the campaign of 1874. It has done mischief to the party, alike in the defeat of the one year and the victory of the other. Here, shortly stated, is the effect of this cumbrous and unfortunate contrivance.

#### *The Minority Clause.*

|                                                             | Tory Loss. | Radical Loss. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| *London, . . . . .                                          | 1          |               |
| Liverpool, . . . . .                                        | 1          |               |
| Manchester, . . . . .                                       | 1          |               |
| Birmingham (no effect).                                     |            |               |
| Leeds (doubtful).                                           |            |               |
| Glasgow, . . . . .                                          |            | 1             |
| Bucks (Tory county—majority, 1874, 1200), . . . . .         | 1          |               |
| Berks (Tory county—majority, 1868, 430), . . . . .          | 1          |               |
| Cambridgeshire (Tory county—majority, 1868, 570), . . . . . | 1          |               |
| Dorset (Tory county), . . . . .                             | 1          |               |
| Herefordshire (Tory county—majority, 1868, 1100), . . . . . | 1          |               |
| Hertfordshire (Tory county—majority, 1874, 1500), . . . . . | 1          |               |
| Oxford (Tory county), . . . . .                             | 1          |               |
|                                                             | —          | —             |
|                                                             | 10         | 1             |
| Deduct Radical loss, . . . . .                              | 1          |               |
|                                                             | —          |               |
| Net Tory loss, . . . . .                                    | 9          |               |

\* The numbers in the boroughs affected by the Minority Clause polled in the elections of 1868 and 1874 were respectively as follows:—



Nine votes, counting eighteen on a division! They were all, or nearly all, that were needed to raise Mr Disraeli's majority of 1874 to Sir Robert Peel's majority of 1841. It is no good to cry over spilt milk; but it is clear that in some way or other the Minority Clause ought to be made somewhat more equal in its operation.

It is not pleasant to speak of Ireland. The Whigs, by this time, must dislike the subject as heartily as the Tories can do. And yet they are to a large extent responsible for the anarchy which now prevails in

that country. We have pointed out on many occasions the consequences which Mr Gladstone's policy of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas was certain to provoke.\* The destruction of the Irish Church, indeed, was not, strictly speaking, an Irish idea, for the Irish Catholic peasant did not care much about it one way or other, and he was on tolerable terms both with his priest and his parson. It was an idea which belonged to the theoretical logic of the study, and which had been called into activity by the rising arrogance of the

## LONDON—4 Members.

| 1868.                       |      |  | 1874.                               |      |  |
|-----------------------------|------|--|-------------------------------------|------|--|
| G. J. Goschen (L), . . .    | 6520 |  | Alderman Cotton (C), . . .          | 8397 |  |
| R. W. Crawford (L), . . .   | 6258 |  | Mr P. Twells (C), . . .             | 8336 |  |
| W. Lawrence (L), . . .      | 6215 |  | Mr J. G. Hubbard (C), . . .         | 8210 |  |
| C. Bell (C), . . .          | 6130 |  | Right Hon. G. J. Goschen (L), . . . | 6787 |  |
| Philip Twells (C), . . .    | 6099 |  | Mr W. Lawrence (L), . . .           | 6654 |  |
| S. J. Gibbons (C), . . .    | 6013 |  | Baron Rothschild (L), . . .         | 6490 |  |
| Baron Rothschild (L), . . . | 5295 |  |                                     |      |  |

## GLASGOW—3 Members.

|                            |        |                        |        |
|----------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------|
| R. Dalglish (L), . . .     | 18,287 | C. Cameron (L), . . .  | 18,455 |
| W. Graham (L), . . .       | 18,062 | G. Anderson (L), . . . | 17,902 |
| G. Anderson (L), . . .     | 17,803 | A. Whitelaw (C), . . . | 14,134 |
| Sir G. Campbell (C), . . . | 10,812 | J. Hunter (C), . . .   | 12,533 |
|                            |        | A. Crum (L), . . .     | 7,453  |
|                            |        | F. Kerr (R. C.), . . . | 4,444  |

## MANCHESTER—3 Members.

|                       |        |                           |        |
|-----------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|
| H. Birley (C), . . .  | 15,486 | H. Birley (C), . . .      | 19,984 |
| T. Bazeley (L), . . . | 14,192 | R. Callander (C), . . .   | 19,643 |
| J. Bright (L), . . .  | 13,514 | Sir T. Bazeley (L), . . . | 19,325 |
| J. Hoare (C), . . .   | 12,684 | Jacob Bright (L), . . .   | 18,727 |
| E. Jones (L), . . .   | 10,662 |                           |        |
| M. Henry (L), . . .   | 5,236  |                           |        |

## LEEDS—3 Members.

|                             |        |                       |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|
| E. Baines (L), . . .        | 15,941 | Carter (L), . . .     | 15,390 |
| R. M. Carter (L), . . .     | 15,105 | Wheelhouse (C), . . . | 14,864 |
| W. J. Wheelhouse (C), . . . | 9,437  | Tennant (C), . . .    | 13,192 |
| Sir A. Fairbairn (C), . . . | 5,658  | Baines (L), . . .     | 11,850 |
| A. Duncombe (L), . . .      | 5,621  | Lees (L), . . .       | 945    |

## LIVERPOOL—3 Members.

|                     |        |                     |        |
|---------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| Graves (C), . . .   | 16,766 | Sandon (C), . . .   | 20,206 |
| Sandon (C), . . .   | 16,222 | Torr (C), . . .     | 19,763 |
| Rathbone (L), . . . | 15,337 | Rathbone (L), . . . | 16,706 |
| Massey (L), . . .   | 15,017 | Carne (L), . . .    | 15,801 |
|                     |        | Simpson (C), . . .  | 2,435  |

\* "Self-Government in Ireland" ('Blackwood's Magazine,' May 1869). The conclusions arrived at in that Article—viz., "Firmness, veracity, strict and stable justice, are the qualities which secure obedience in Ireland; and if, instead of anarchic parliaments and penny newspapers, we could give her a just Lord-Deputy, 'with full powers,' and some natural turn for the governing work, we might look forward with hope to the future,"—have lately been remarkably illustrated and enforced by Mr Froude's work on 'The English in Ireland.'

Vatican. "Irish ideas" really meant the expulsion of the Saxon, and the recovery of the lands which he had appropriated; and the policy of governing on such a basis has landed us—in what? Home Rule in the south of Ireland, and Agricultural Communism in the north. The elections all over the island are in every point of view disheartening to sober observers. The great cities of Dublin and Belfast, indeed, in Sir Arthur Guinness and Messrs Corry and Johnston, have selected men of whom any party might be proud: but everywhere else anarchical ideas are in the ascendant. The intellect as well as the conscience of the people has been debauched. All sorts of wild theories about the province of Government, and the tenure of property, obtain currency among the electors. This social disorganisation, this intellectual saturnalia, are the bitter fruits of Mr Gladstone's Administration;

and it will require many years of just and firm and rational government to enable the people of Ireland to recover their senses.\*

The numerical result of the Irish elections may be thus stated. The Tories have won 5 seats and lost 10—their net loss being 5. But the Liberals are nowhere,—unless to be a Liberal is to be a Home-Ruler. Of its 103 representatives, the Home-Rulers number 50, the Tories 35—the Liberals may be credited with the balance.

The restoration of Scotland to political sanity has been even more marked than the most sanguine could have anticipated. When the battle of 1868 was finished, Toryism, as a political force, appeared to be extinct among us. Only a remnant had been left—only seven members were spared. The disaster was overwhelming, and we regretted it, we are bound to say, for other than party reasons.† The recovery

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\* A certain measure of "Home Rule," indeed, might quite safely be granted both to Ireland and to Scotland. There is no reason why most of the private business relating to these countries should not be disposed of by tribunals sitting in Dublin and Edinburgh. The expense of obtaining a Scotch Road-Bill or Water-Bill, at present, is something enormous. Hosts of witnesses are carried up to London, are kept there for weeks, and sometimes months, are often sent back without being examined, in consequence of the House rising unexpectedly, or the Committee being otherwise engaged, or becoming impatient. Parliamentary Counsel are employed at ruinous fees to state the case to a body which sits at most four hours a-day, and which is not qualified by training or experience to give a satisfactory decision. The transaction of Scotch private Parliamentary business must cost those interested not less than two or three hundred thousand pounds per annum; whereas, if it were remitted to a tribunal sitting at Edinburgh, composed of a certain number of lawyers and experts, the work might be done far more effectively and at one-third of the cost,—to say nothing of the propriety of "keeping," as the proverb has it, "our ain fish-guts for our ain sea-mews."

† "We do not look at the issue of the Scotch elections simply from a party point of view when we say that we regard it with deep regret. The intellectual Liberal cannot witness this unprecedented agreement of opinion throughout a whole province without a feeling of discomfort and apprehension. Party government, of course, becomes impossible when there are no parties, or (which comes practically to the same thing) when there is one only. We may call each other as ugly names as we can invent; but both Whig and Tory are aware that the vigour of our public life depends mainly upon the keenness of our political antagonism. When a whole people march like a regiment and vote like a machine—when a military monotony of sentiment takes possession of them, and whatever is eccentric or original or independent in religious or political life is coarsely and stupidly repressed—one is tempted to inquire how far the influences which have produced these results are truly Liberal, and how far the culture to which they are due can be regarded as catholic. . . . It will not be long before they discover, in Perthshire as elsewhere, that they have made an egregious blunder. They have lost the services of men who were intimately



has been amazingly sudden. The Tory party in Scotland have not less than 19 representatives in the new Parliament. The seven seats of 1868, with the exception of Morayshire (which has been unfortunately lost), have been retained, and twelve new seats have been added. Lord Dalkeith has recovered the Metropolitan county; and Perthshire, in returning Sir William Stirling Maxwell, has regained the laurels which she had thrown away in a pet. The example set by the great city of Glasgow has been followed by the thriving burghs of Ayrshire, Argyllshire, and Wigtownshire, from which Mr Craufurd and Mr Young have been ejected. Northern and Southern Ayrshire, Berwickshire, Dumfriesshire,

Stirlingshire, have returned to the true faith. A Tory Lord Advocate worthily represents the ancient Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen. The great industrial county of Lanark has obtained a Tory member; and, spite of its Whig Duke, Roxburgh has gone over to the enemy. The Liberals of the county of Peebles and Selkirk did not even venture to contest the seat which in 1868 Sir Graham Montgomery won by a neck. The Radicals retained Caithness-shire (where in 1868 they had a majority of 237) by thirteen votes, and the Stewartry by four. Two years ago, the Tory candidate for Aberdeen obtained 700 votes; at this election, nominated in his absence at a moment's notice, he obtained 2700.\*

acquainted with their local wants and habits and usages. They have elected men who are not merely ignorant of Scotland and Scottish idiosyncrasies, but who have promised that which neither Scotsman nor Englishman can perform. At next election the inevitable reaction will bear bitter fruit. The Radical party will find that they were penny-wise and pound-foolish, when, speculating upon a trumpety agricultural discontent, they determined to eject such a man as 'Stirling of Keir,' and brought down an Englishman to discharge the ungracious task which no Scottish gentleman would undertake."—'Blackwood's Magazine' for Jan. 1869.

\* *Scotch Changes, 1868-1874.*

| Constituency.                                                                                                   | Radical Majority,<br>1868. | Tory Majority,<br>1874. | Seats<br>gained<br>by<br>Tories. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ayr Burghs, . . . . .                                                                                           | No Tory Candidate          | 14                      | 1                                |
| Ayrshire (North), . . . . .                                                                                     | 75                         | 262                     | 1                                |
| Ayrshire (South), . . . . .                                                                                     | 25                         | No contest              | 1                                |
| Berwickshire, . . . . .                                                                                         | No Tory Candidate          | 74                      | 1                                |
| Dumfriesshire, . . . . .                                                                                        | 44                         | 133                     | 1                                |
| Glasgow (3d seat), . . . . .                                                                                    | 7000                       | 6681                    | 1                                |
| Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities, . . . . .                                                                    | 67                         | 504                     | 1                                |
| Mid-Lothian, . . . . .                                                                                          | 241                        | 135                     | 1                                |
| Lanarkshire (South), . . . . .                                                                                  | 221                        | 21                      | 1                                |
| Perthshire, . . . . .                                                                                           | 279                        | 494                     | 1                                |
| Roxburghshire, . . . . .                                                                                        | 140                        | 27                      | 1                                |
| Stirlingshire, . . . . .                                                                                        | No contest                 | 44                      | 1                                |
| Wigtown Burghs, . . . . .                                                                                       | 120                        | 2                       | 1                                |
|                                                                                                                 |                            |                         | 13                               |
| Add Counties of Bute, Dumbarton, Moray, Haddington, Inverness, Wigtown, and<br>Selkirk, held in 1868, . . . . . |                            |                         | 7                                |
|                                                                                                                 |                            |                         | 20                               |
| But the Tories have lost Moray, . . . . .                                                                       |                            |                         | 1                                |
|                                                                                                                 |                            |                         | 19                               |
| Scotch seats held by Tories in 1874, . . . . .                                                                  |                            |                         | 19                               |

In 1869, Mr E. S. Gordon, Q.C., on the elevation of Mr Moncrieff to the Bench, was

So much for the Minority Clause, and the Scotch and Irish constituencies. The English election returns must be submitted to a more searching examination; and with this view we have prepared a series of tables, mainly referring to them,\* which we think will interest our readers, and enable them to estimate the magnitude of the victory. Mr Gladstone says that isolated contests, "of which the issue is in a great degree dependent on close discipline,

and finished and concentrated organisation," do not afford any conclusive test of the relative strength of parties; so we put the "bye-elections" out of view in the meantime, and take, as the basis of our comparison, the election returns of December 1868 and February 1874. Our first table gives the population and electoral strength of the different boroughs which have changed sides since 1868.

*In Boroughs of more than 100,000 Inhabitants,*

*The Tories have won—*

| Name.             | Population. | Electors. |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Marylebone, . .   | 477,555     | 32,130    |
| Glasgow, . .      | 394,864     | 49,966    |
| Tower Hamlets, .  | 391,568     | 31,560    |
| Manchester, . .   | 383,843     | 56,699    |
| Leeds, . .        | 259,201     | 41,407    |
| Chelsea, . .      | 258,011     | 16,825    |
| Dublin, . .       | 254,293     | 13,190    |
| Westminster, . .  | 246,413     | 18,840    |
| Southwark, . .    | 207,335     | 19,321    |
| Stoke-on-Trent, . | 130,507     | 18,195    |
| Greenwich, . .    | 167,632     | 14,921    |
| Newcastle, . .    | 128,160     | 12,500    |
| Belfast, . .      | 121,602     | 14,464    |
| Oldham, . .       | 113,092     | 15,633    |
| Portsmouth, . .   | 112,958     | 11,928    |
| Brighton, . .     | 103,760     | 9,626     |

*The Radicals have won—*

| Name. | Population. | Electors. |
|-------|-------------|-----------|
|       |             | None.     |

*In Boroughs of between 60,000 and 100,000 Inhabitants,*

*The Tories have won—*

|                 |        |        |
|-----------------|--------|--------|
| Nottingham, . . | 86,608 | 14,674 |
| Norwich, . .    | 80,390 | 12,338 |
| London, . .     | 74,732 | 22,716 |
| Plymouth, . .   | 69,414 | 4,671  |
| Devonport, . .  | 64,864 | 3,306  |

*The Radicals have won—*

|                |        |        |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| Bolton, . .    | 92,655 | 11,801 |
| Blackburn, . . | 82,926 | 9,053  |

returned for the Universities by a majority of 504. There was no contest at the general election. Dumfriesshire was regained in 1869 by a majority of 36. Renfrewshire is not entered in the table, as although it was temporarily occupied by the Tories, gallantly led by Col. Campbell at a "bye" election in 1873, it was again lost at the general election—Radical majority, 88.

\* The calculations in these tables have been carefully made; but it is possible that, from the want of time to compare and correct, some errors may have crept in. These cannot, however, affect the general conclusions. There is no difficulty in dealing with elections where each party has only one candidate, or where the possession of one seat only is disputed; but where each party has two or more candidates contending for two or more seats, some amount of local knowledge is required to insure substantial accuracy. In the latter class of cases, when no special sources of information are available to us, we take the mean average number of votes polled by the candidates on each side, which, though an approximation only, may be held to represent fairly enough the relative strength of the rival parties in the constituency.



*In Boroughs of between 30,000 and 60,000 Inhabitants,**The Tories have won—*

| Name.                    | Population. | Electors. |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Bath, . . .              | 53,714      | 5,189     |
| Northampton, . . .       | 44,871      | 5,912     |
| Cheltenham, . . .        | 44,519      | 3,533     |
| Exeter, . . .            | 44,248      | 6,152     |
| Chatham, . . .           | 44,135      | 4,970     |
| Cricklade, . . .         | 43,552      | 5,761     |
| Ipswich, . . .           | 43,136      | 4,786     |
| Wigan, . . .             | 39,160      | 4,577     |
| Monmouth Boroughs, . . . | 38,656      | 3,797     |
| Staleybridge, . . .      | 35,128      | 4,918     |
| Cambridge, . . .         | 34,099      | 4,021     |
| Warrington, . . .        | 33,053      | 4,152     |
| Ayr Burghs, . . .        | 34,578      | 3,327     |

*The Radicals have won—*

| Name.              | Population. | Electors. |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Southampton, . . . | 54,057      | 6,093     |
| Stockport, . . .   | 53,001      | 6,019     |
| Worcester, . . .   | 41,486      | 5,592     |
| Coventry, . . .    | 41,350      | 7,773     |
| Hartlepool, . . .  | 38,302      | 3,746     |

*In Boroughs of between 20,000 and 30,000 Inhabitants,**The Tories have won—*

|                      |        |       |
|----------------------|--------|-------|
| Wakefield, . . .     | 28,079 | 3,584 |
| Dover, . . .         | 28,270 | 3,443 |
| Gravesend, . . .     | 27,451 | 2,639 |
| Lincoln, . . .       | 26,762 | 4,083 |
| Colchester, . . .    | 26,361 | 2,975 |
| Carmarthen, . . .    | 25,790 | 3,529 |
| Scarboro', . . .     | 24,244 | 2,816 |
| Grimsby, . . .       | 26,496 | 4,712 |
| Kidderminster, . . . | 20,803 | 2,350 |
| Canterbury, . . .    | 20,961 | 3,156 |
| Londonderry, . . .   | 20,493 | 1,775 |

*The Radicals have won—*

|                          |        |       |
|--------------------------|--------|-------|
| Shrewsbury, . . .        | 23,300 | 3,766 |
| Pembroke Boroughs, . . . | 22,140 | 3,212 |

*In Boroughs of between 10,000 and 20,000 Inhabitants,**The Tories have won—*

|                        |        |       |
|------------------------|--------|-------|
| Hereford, . . .        | 18,355 | 2,298 |
| Bedford, . . .         | 16,849 | 2,122 |
| Christchurch, . . .    | 15,415 | 1,534 |
| Bury St Edmunds, . . . | 14,928 | 1,284 |
| Winchester, . . .      | 14,709 | 1,611 |
| Salisbury, . . .       | 13,848 | 1,451 |
| Grantham, . . .        | 13,284 | 2,023 |
| Berwick, . . .         | 13,231 | 1,336 |
| Lewes, . . .           | 10,753 | 1,382 |
| St Ives, . . .         | 10,043 | 1,337 |
| Wigtown Burghs, . . .  | 10,385 | 871   |
| Truro, . . .           | 10,999 | 1,442 |
| Tamworth, . . .        | 11,502 | 1,652 |

*The Radicals have won—*

|                   |        |       |
|-------------------|--------|-------|
| Boston, . . .     | 18,289 | 2,581 |
| Falmouth, . . .   | 16,819 | 2,173 |
| Stafford, . . .   | 15,946 | 3,151 |
| Newry, . . .      | 13,334 | 901   |
| Barnstaple, . . . | 11,790 | 1,636 |
| Poole, . . .      | 10,129 | 1,419 |

*In Boroughs of under 10,000 Inhabitants,**The Tories have won—*

|                    |       |       |
|--------------------|-------|-------|
| Frome, . . .       | 9,752 | 1,350 |
| Windsor, . . .     | 9,520 | 1,751 |
| Guildford, . . .   | 9,801 | 1,223 |
| Horsham, . . .     | 7,831 | 800   |
| Buckingham, . . .  | 7,545 | 1,105 |
| Maldon, . . .      | 6,927 | 1,609 |
| Petersfield, . . . | 6,103 | 817   |
| Andover, . . .     | 5,744 | 640   |
| Knaresboro', . . . | 5,206 | 788   |

*The Radicals have won—*

|                    |       |       |
|--------------------|-------|-------|
| Droitwich, . . .   | 9,510 | 1,370 |
| Dungarvan, . . .   | 8,614 | 317   |
| Bewdley, . . .     | 7,610 | 1,053 |
| Bridgewater, . . . | 7,303 | 1,335 |
| Abingdon, . . .    | 6,583 | 845   |
| Westbury, . . .    | 6,395 | 1,102 |
| Coleraine, . . .   | 6,208 | 373   |
| Dungannon, . . .   | 3,886 | 257   |

It thus appears that while in boroughs below 20,000 inhabitants the Radical nearly equals the Tory

gain, on the other hand, in boroughs of between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants, the Radicals have only

won 9 seats as against 29 won by the Tories; while in boroughs of over 100,000 inhabitants (where the Tories have won 16 seats) the Radicals are literally nowhere. These figures require no comment. They bear eloquent testimony to the impression which the Tories have made on the most powerful, most populous, and most enlightened borough constituencies in the empire. Among the Radical gains, the small and corrupt Irish boroughs, where 50 electors vote on one side and 50 on the other, flourish conspicuously. Had it not been for these and similar supporters, the Liberal defeat would have been even more crushing than it was. It would rather seem that the small boroughs have ceased to fulfil the purpose for which they were retained in our Parliamentary system, and may now be safely dispensed with. Many distinguished statesmen have sat for pocket-boroughs, and in this way they were useful if not ornamental. They no longer, however, return men of mark. Until quite lately, the small local personages never dreamt of going into Parliament; but the general increase of wealth among all classes enables the country solicitor and the county banker to take a house in London during the season; and it is found, as a rule, that a pushing man of this

class has commonly the best chance of carrying the borough in which he has made his money, and to which he may be said to belong. Party managers are hardly to be blamed if they prefer to run the candidate most likely to win; but it becomes matter for consideration whether in these circumstances the Tory party have any interest in maintaining an anomaly out of which capital is made by democratic agitators. There appears at least to be no good reason why (if at some future time the Radicals should insist upon a redistribution of seats) a number of the smaller boroughs should not be grouped together, and the seats thus rendered available handed over to the counties which are still most inadequately represented.

With the above table it will be instructive to compare the next, which shows the gross and net advance in voting power made by the Tories in a considerable number of the English boroughs which they have won. It gives also, in each case, the Tory majority of 1874, as compared with the Radical majority of 1868; and it will be seen that, with one or two exceptions, the great majorities which the Radicals obtained in 1868 have uniformly been replaced by *substantial* Tory majorities.

*English Boroughs held by Radicals, attacked by Tories, gained by Tories.*

LANCASHIRE AND WESTERN.

| Name.                   | Radical<br>Majority,<br>1868.  | Tory<br>Majority,<br>1874. | Tory<br>Voters,<br>1868. | Tory<br>Voters,<br>1874. | Tory<br>Increase. |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Kidderminster, . . .    | 450                            | 111                        | 821                      | 1,509                    | 688               |
| Warrington, . . .       | 27                             | 180                        | 1,957                    | 2,381                    | 424               |
| Wigan, . . .            | 295                            | 600                        | 1,897                    | 2,400                    | 603               |
| Tamworth, . . .         | 130                            | 640                        | 798                      | 1,086                    | 288               |
| Manchester, . . .       | See Minority                   | Table.                     | 15,486                   | 19,984                   | 4,498             |
| Stoke-upon-Trent, . . . | { No contest—<br>two Liberals. | 810                        |                          | 6,180                    |                   |
| Oldham, . . .           | 31                             | 130                        | 6,100                    | 8,520                    | 2,420             |
| Monmouth, . . .         | No contest.                    | 633                        |                          | 2,090                    |                   |
| Carmarthen, . . .       | 1,300                          | 173                        | 594                      | 1,644                    | 1,060             |



## YORKSHIRE AND EASTERN.

| Name.                     | Radical<br>Majority,<br>1868. | Tory<br>Majority,<br>1874. | Tory<br>Voters,<br>1868. | Tory<br>Voters,<br>1874. | Tory<br>Increase. |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Newcastle, . . . . .      | 4,000                         | 670                        | 2,725                    | 6,479                    | 3,754             |
| Wakefield, . . . . .      | 45                            | 188                        | 1,512                    | 1,783                    | 271               |
| Lincoln, . . . . .        | No contest.                   | At top.                    |                          | 2,107                    |                   |
| Knaresboro', . . . . .    | 15                            | 88                         | 347                      | 397                      | 50                |
| Cambridge, . . . . .      | 456                           | 53                         | 1,412                    | 1,809                    | 387               |
| Grantham, . . . . .       | No contest.                   | 71                         |                          | 965                      |                   |
| Scarboro', . . . . .      | 930                           | 180                        | 742                      | 1,103                    | 361               |
| Great Grimsby, . . . . .  | 211                           | 230                        | 1,337                    | 1,533                    | 196               |
| Berwick, . . . . .        | 300                           | 228                        | 507                      | 533                      | 26                |
| Norwich (1871), . . . . . | 1,300                         | 47                         | 3,389                    | 5,823                    | 2,434             |
| Northampton, . . . . .    | 520                           | 380                        | 1,634                    | 2,690                    | 1,056             |
| Leeds, . . . . .          | See Minority Table.           |                            | 9,437                    | 14,000                   | 4,563             |

## MID AND METROPOLITAN.

|                                             |                     |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Chatham, . . . . .                          | 184                 | 669   | 1,858 | 2,132 | 274   |
| Guildford, . . . . .                        | 21                  | 243   | 515   | 673   | 158   |
| Greenwich, . . . . .                        | 1,900               | 200   | 4,704 | 5,880 | 1,176 |
| Bedford, . . . . .                          | 480                 | 4     | 769   | 1,010 | 231   |
| Cambridge, . . . . .                        | 456                 | 50    | 1,412 | 1,800 | 388   |
| Bury St Edmunds, . . . . .                  | 110                 | 300   | 593   | 960   | 367   |
| Colchester, . . . . .                       | 192                 | 220   | 1,250 | 1,461 | 211   |
| Windsor, . . . . .                          | 8                   | 450   | 795   | 1,064 | 269   |
| Maldon, . . . . .                           | 153                 | 113   | 504   |       |       |
| Buckingham, . . . . .                       | 125                 | 197   | 338   | 589   | 251   |
| Marylebone, . . . . .                       | 4,022               | 1,600 | 5,591 | 9,849 | 4,258 |
| Canterbury (2d seat), . . . . .             | 79                  | 500   | 1,453 | 1,488 | 35    |
| Ipswich, . . . . .                          | 1,511               | 500   | 2,044 | 3,059 | 1,015 |
| Gravesend, . . . . .                        | 168                 | 213   | 1,069 | 1,355 | 286   |
| Chelsea, . . . . .                          | 3,222               | 470   | 4,056 | 7,172 | 3,116 |
| Tower Hamlets (2d seat), . . . . .          | 403                 | 1,300 | 7,446 | 7,228 |       |
| Southwark, . . . . .                        | 3,500               | 1,200 | 2,495 | 5,716 | 3,221 |
| London, . . . . .                           | See Minority Table. |       | 6,100 | 8,300 | 2,200 |
| Westminster, . . . . . 2d seat uncontested. | 5,000               |       | 7,648 | 9,025 | 1,377 |
| Lewes, . . . . .                            | 14                  | 272   | 587   | 779   | 192   |

## SOUTHERN.

|                                            |             |       |       |       |       |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Andover, . . . . .                         | 71          | 136   | 307   | 395   | 88    |
| Bath, . . . . .                            | 163         | 6     | 2,024 | 2,397 | 373   |
| Plymouth, . . . . .                        | 560         | 300   | 1,506 | 2,020 | 514   |
| Horsham, . . . . .                         | even.       | 210   | 380   | 529   | 149   |
| Petersfield, . . . . .                     | 42          | 11    | 321   | 370   | 49    |
| Winchester, . . . . .                      | 230         | 250   | 529   | 949   | 420   |
| Hereford, . . . . .                        | 108         | 76    | 927   | 978   | 51    |
| Cheltenham, . . . . .                      | 228         | 279   | 1,460 |       |       |
| Woodstocke, . . . . .                      | 21          | 165   | 481   | 569   | 88    |
| Exeter, . . . . .                          | 160         | 260   | 2,122 | 2,523 | 401   |
| Portsmouth, . . . . . 2d seat uncontested. | 1,300       |       | 5,306 | 5,900 | 594   |
| Salisbury, . . . . .                       | 90          | 76    | 623   | 835   | 212   |
| Devonport, . . . . .                       | 162         | 200   | 1,368 | 1,504 | 136   |
| Christchurch, . . . . .                    | 49          | 371   | 560   | 978   | 418   |
| Cricklade, . . . . .                       | 600         | 400   | 2,009 | 2,600 | 591   |
| Dover, . . . . .                           | 69          | 365   | 1,387 | 1,595 | 208   |
| Shoreham, . . . . .                        | No contest. | 1,600 |       | 2,527 |       |
| Brighton, . . . . .                        | 1,187*      | 1,000 | 2,024 | 4,200 | 2,176 |
| St Ives, . . . . .                         | No contest. | 319   |       | 751   |       |

\* Average for two Tories; but Ashbury was only 64 behind the second Liberal.

The number and importance of the seats which the Tories have won is not, however, the measure of their success. The decrease of Liberal voters in those constituencies which the Radicals have contrived to retain is a most significant and remarkable fact. In

one or two of the Eastern boroughs the Radicals have won by increased majorities; but everywhere else the large majorities of 1868 have sensibly diminished,—growing small by degrees and beautifully less, in a most surprising way.

*English Boroughs held by Radicals, attacked by Tories, retained by Radicals.*

| Name.                           | Electors. | Radical<br>Majority, 1868. | Radical<br>Majority, 187 | Radical<br>Decrease. |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Banbury, . . . . .              | 1,715     | 380                        | 84                       | 296                  |
| Macclesfield, . . . . .         | 4,839     | 340                        | 32                       | 308                  |
| Reading, . . . . .              | 3,730     | 650                        | 29                       | 621                  |
| Bury, . . . . .                 | 5,518     | 580                        | 516                      | 64                   |
| Rochdale, . . . . .             | 9,561     | 1,200                      | 500                      | 700                  |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme, . . . . . | 2,849     | 340                        | 80                       | 260                  |
| Wednesbury, . . . . .           | 17,644    | 2,400                      | 1,700                    | 700                  |
| Whitby, . . . . .               | 1,998     | 380                        | 120                      | 260                  |
| Newark, . . . . .               | 1,919     | 200                        | 88                       | 112                  |
| Leicester, . . . . .            | 14,397    | 4,500                      | 1,650                    | 2,850                |
| Hull, . . . . .                 | 19,012    | 1,178                      | 794                      | 384                  |
| Rochester, . . . . .            | 2,551     | 700                        | 420                      | 280                  |
| Hythe, . . . . .                | 2,303     | 750                        | 237                      | 513                  |
| Hackney, . . . . .              | 37,930    | 11,000                     | 600                      | 10,400               |
| Finsbury, . . . . .             | 34,007    | 6,400                      | 1,900                    | 4,500                |
| Lambeth, . . . . .              | 35,831    | 7,600                      | 580                      | 7,020                |
| Maidstone, . . . . .            | 3,357     | 267                        | 77                       | 190                  |
| Bristol, . . . . .              | 21,816    | 2,100                      | 180                      | 1,920                |
| Tewkesbury, . . . . .           | 707       | 176                        | 27                       | 149                  |
| Hastings, . . . . .             | 2,823     | 550                        | 250                      | 200                  |
| Oxford, . . . . .               | 5,387     | 1,470                      | 83                       | 1,387                |
| Stroud, . . . . .               | 5,757     | 750                        | 21                       | 729                  |
| Helston, . . . . .              | 1,066     | 120                        | 53                       | 67                   |
| Cardiff Boroughs, . . . . .     | 5,718     | 446                        | 9                        | 437                  |
| Flint Boroughs, . . . . .       | 3,169     | No contest.                | 4                        |                      |
| Denbigh Boroughs, . . . . .     | 2,946     | 374                        | 30                       | 344                  |

32, 29, 27, 21, 53, 9, 4, 30! these are the majorities which the Radicals can now obtain in constituencies where, five years ago, they outnumbered their adversaries by hundreds. If the Tories of Macclesfield, and Reading, and Stroud, and Oxford, and Cardiff, and Flint, had been allowed another week to prepare, it cannot be doubted that the Radical positions in these boroughs would have been rendered untenable.

The above tables show how the Tories have succeeded in their attack upon positions held by Radicals; the corresponding figures,

which exhibit the measure of success which attended the Radical attack, may be very briefly dismissed. Few important positions were gained by them, and these only by inconsiderable majorities. They won Durham by 32 votes; Barnstaple by 33; Westbury by 22; Falmouth by 41; the Pembroke boroughs by 20; the second seat at Bolton by 33; and the second seat at Blackburn by 15. On the other hand, the Tory majorities at Birkenhead, Preston, Salford, Liverpool, and other great industrial centres, have largely increased.\*

What, then, in so far as the

|                         | Tory majority, 1868. | Tory majority, 1874. |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| * Birkenhead, . . . . . | 880                  | 2112                 |
| Salford, . . . . .      | 40                   | 200                  |
| Preston, . . . . .      | 1000                 | 1600                 |
| Liverpool, . . . . .    | 1000                 | 4000                 |



boroughs are concerned, is the general result of the campaign?

It may be said, in the first place, that we have gained important positions all over England. If we look at the map we will find that in each county several of the chief boroughs are in our possession, and there are few counties in which we have failed to secure the capital town. Our success becomes more conspicuous as we approach the vast central stations of industry and commerce. Of the steady loyalty of the great Lancashire community it is almost superfluous to speak. Out of the thirty-three members which it returns, only six belong to the Liberal party. Manchester, Oldham, Warrington, and Wigan now stand side by side under the Tory banner with Salford, Preston, Birkenhead, and Liverpool. The fidelity of this vast population to the constitutional principles which they have espoused is a most significant circumstance, and appears to show that the charge of political fickleness cannot fairly be maintained as against the great constituencies. Lancashire, at least, sticks to its creed with characteristic tenacity, and its loyal spirit has proved contagious. The industrial counties by which it is surrounded, with the partial exception of Yorkshire, are all vehemently Tory. In the metropolis and the metropolitan boroughs, again, we see the same process in a different stage of growth. The Toryism of Lancashire is of old standing; the Toryism of the capital is not much older than Mr Disraeli's Reform Bill. Since the first Reform Bill, London has been exclusively, or almost exclusively, a Radical preserve. The election of 1868, however, proved that all the way from Chelsea to Greenwich a strong Tory element prevailed. The leaven has now leavened the lump. In the City itself, in Westminster, Marylebone, and Greenwich, the

Tories have returned their candidates by great majorities. They have gained seats in Southwark, the Tower Hamlets, and Chelsea. Among the metropolitan constituencies the members are now as nearly as possible equally divided between the rival parties. The influence of the metropolis all over England is necessarily very powerful; and the steady and obstinate advance of the Tories upon the citadel has been felt along the whole line. It may be said, indeed, with perfect truth, that the only part of England in which Radicalism continues to retain any distinct vitality is Yorkshire. In Yorkshire it must be admitted that we have not made as much progress as elsewhere. At the same time, we have no belief in hasty conversions: it is perhaps as well that the cautious and sturdy Yorkshireman should stick as long as he can to his earnest and logical but impracticable convictions; nor after our decisive victories at Leeds, Newcastle, Scarborough, and Wakefield, have we any good reason to grumble. The Tories of Sheffield have returned Mr Roebuck, and the Tories of Bradford have returned Mr Forster. Mr Roebuck is a completely independent politician, and Mr Forster has been endowed with rare administrative capacity; but neither would have secured his seat had the Tories held aloof. It is right that such men should be in Parliament; and we think that our friends acted wisely in bringing the one forward, and in keeping the other in.

So much for the boroughs.

We must own that we looked forward to the results of the county elections with mingled confidence and apprehension. The majorities by which they had been secured in 1868 were so decisive that any serious defection appeared to be out of the question. Yet it was just possible that the magnificent majorities of that year might be due not

to the extension of the county franchise (as we believed — Mr Disraeli's county franchise being in fact the supplement of the Chandos clause in the first Reform Act), but to the keen clerical agitation which the proposal to abolish the Irish Church had naturally excited. It is enough to say that the Tories have lost only one county seat which they held in 1868 (North Durham), and that they have won twenty-four. Most of the Tory seats were uncontested, and nearly a dozen of those held by Liberals were surrendered without a blow. When a Tory seat was attacked, it was generally found that the majority of '74 was as great as, if not greater than, the majority of '68; and the seats which they occupied after a fight were gained by sweeping majorities. It is impossible to deny that the Tories are to-day immensely stronger in the counties than they were in 1868,—the great victory of that year having been tested, consolidated, and sustained. They have driven the Liberals out of the rich and populous metropolitan counties,—in Middlesex itself by a majority of two to one; the whole of Lincolnshire has been surrendered; they have penetrated into Wilts, and Gloucester, and remote Cornwall; and more than one Welsh county has returned to its allegiance. It is not now an exaggeration to say (and in 1868 we used the words advisedly) that, apart from the counties to which the Minority provision applies, "there are barely a score of county seats on which the Whigs can reckon."

What, then, is the general political significance of the facts to which we have called attention? If it be true, as we have striven to show, that this is no accidental surprise, no chance advantage, and that the election of 1874 is but the complement of 1868, the conclusion is irre-

sistible,—*the Tory party is stronger to-day than it has been at any time since (on the defeat of the Coalition towards the close of last century) the constituencies went over in a body to the younger Pitt.* It is not unusual to look back with regret to the era of 1841. In that year Sir Robert Peel obtained a majority of between eighty and ninety. But his majority, numerically stronger, was infinitely weaker in moral and political weight than the majority which Mr Disraeli has secured. We mean, in short, that the position of the party in its relations to the country is far *sounder* now than it was in 1841. The industrial activities of the north, the intellectual interests of the metropolis, the great Whig counties—a tower of strength in themselves—were then arrayed against us. Not one of the metropolitan boroughs was held by us—we now divide the representation. We held only five seats in Lancashire,—now we hold twenty-six. A moiety of the great English counties belonged by a kind of divine prescriptive title to the Whigs,—the counties, with rare and inconsiderable exceptions, are now in the hands of the Tories. The adhesion of these immense interests to the Tory party is at length an accomplished fact. And this vast advance is due in no small measure, we are bound to acknowledge, to the profound conviction which lies at the root of Mr Disraeli's political career—faith in the English people, and in the Monarchy which has made England what it is;—

"Broad-based upon her people's will,  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea."

"Anyhow," says a distinguished author, in a letter written during last December, now lying before us, "I am satisfied to feel that the great Revolutionary wave has spent its force, and that the next fifty years will probably be more and more Conservative."



## MR GLADSTONE'S NIGHT ATTACK AND ITS RESULTS.

IN January, when we addressed our readers on the Political Aspect of the Year, everything seemed to promise a tranquil session of Parliament. There had been some rumours of dissolution in the autumn, but these had died away: changes in the Ministry carried on to the very end of last year, and at last the notice that Parliament was to assemble and proceed to business on the 5th February, laid to rest all expectations of startling moves this winter: we saw honourable members and their constituents alike resting beside their arms enjoying the truce. But soon we

"Saw another sight,  
When the drum beat at dead of night."

It was well for us Conservatives that we slept with one eye open, or the beating up of our quarters by the enemy might have involved a serious mischance. As it happened, we drove back the crafty foe with, we fancy, considerable loss. Our sentinels were on the alert; our forces stood to their arms on the first alarm; and the stratagem recoiled on the head of him who invented it. But the enemy proposed a far different event. We were to be caught napping; before we could recover from our confusion all the places of arms were to be carried; rubbing our astonished eyes, we were to behold our adversary established in possession, and to hear him singing—no, we beg pardon, solemnly reciting—"Hey, Johnnie Cope, are ye waukin' yet?" or some such insulting song of triumph.

It has yet to be shown how a Minister, without violating his duty to the country, can thus tamper with our electoral rights. Already the plea has been advanced (by the late Prime Minister himself, if we remember rightly) that the time of

dissolving Parliament is a matter entirely within the discretion of the Crown. Few would desire to dispute this; but we may surely advance another assertion equally difficult to contradict—namely, that in the calling of a new Parliament every practicable means shall be resorted to for insuring a free and deliberate expression of the will of the country. The prerogative, then, if unrestricted as to time, must nevertheless be exercised with due regard to the electors' convenience, and to the free and full exercise of the franchise. How does such a proceeding as we witnessed in January answer to this last requirement? The people lulled by a notification that Parliament would meet in February as usual; no word of warning spoken as the time advanced; then, when the Houses were within a fortnight of reassembling, a sudden announcement of dissolution, and a demand for the almost immediate return of a new House of Commons! If we admit that such a proceeding is constitutional, we must at the same time admit that the prerogative may to some extent be used for the purpose of packing the Lower House! Mr Gladstone's disposition to strain the prerogative to the utmost for his own purposes, and to misread laws and ordinances, is now so well known, that an inquiry into the legality of his late manoeuvre will certainly be demanded by the people.

Putting aside the question whether his action was constitutional or otherwise, we turn to face the other question—far less important, but for the moment more powerfully exercising men's minds—why the Minister was moved to call a new Parliament at all in January. The country has been puzzling over this

as if it had been a Christmas conundrum. Possibly an answer may never be given by those who alone can know; and this mystery may remain for ever, like the Man in the Iron Mask, or the identity of Junius, impenetrable. But where people cannot absolutely know, they will be prompt to guess; and they have not been slow in divining motives of many different complexions for the *coup d'état*, as it has been called. The supposition most easily put together is, that the continued readjustment of the Cabinet, and the notice of the assembling of Parliament, were simply expedients for putting the electors off their guard; that the dissolution (long before determined on as part of the plot) was then "sprung," as the daily press had it, in the hope that much profit would accrue to the then Government from thus confounding and hurrying the constituencies. This solution supposes all the difficulties of the Cabinet, as exhibited in the shuffling of the cards and the new appointments, to have been simulated, and for that reason, if for no other, we are inclined to reject it; for we believe the difficulties to have been real and most embarrassing. We will add, too, that, although we hold no very high opinion of Mr Gladstone, and although we have, as has been shown, something against him in this very matter of the dissolution, we have no right, without strong evidence, to suppose him guilty of having for months acted falsely to both sides, that he might at last steal a march upon the people. That such an imputation could find voice is a proof of the extent to which the right honourable gentleman has fallen in public estimation. Five years ago he was credited with excellences which he never possessed, nor came within many degrees of; now he is accused of misdeeds of which probably he is incapable. Again, it

has been suggested that the (perhaps unlawful) retention of his seat for Greenwich, after he had accepted a second office, and his miserable Black War, were things the denunciation of which before Parliament he was not able to abide; and so he dissolved in order that the one difficulty might disappear, and that there might be time for opinion to settle down regarding the other. But to this we object that, injudicious as we think the retention of his seat to have been, whether in law he may have been wrong or right, he knew as well in November as he did in January what might be said about it; also, that he could have foreseen at an earlier date how he was likely to be attacked about the war. If, therefore, these had been his reasons, they would have operated earlier. Our belief is, that the resolution to put an end to the Parliament came nearly as suddenly to the Premier as it did to the country. He may have before thought of it as a *dernier ressort*; but we firmly believe that he had not decided on it many hours when he startled us all with the announcement of it. Since last May there have been outward and visible signs in plenty that all was not going on serenely within the four walls of the Council-chamber in Downing Street.

"In that wild council words waxed warm and strange."

Mr Gladstone was no longer all in all there. Since the rejection of the Gagging Bill, it may be presumed, other doctors thought proper to propound methods of securing the general prosperity; and the doctors, we are afraid, differed, and, as those learned men sometimes do, expressed their differences in forcible terms. Well, some of the malcontents were shifted about, some were dismissed; and at length, by way of firing the greatest gun, Mr Bright was summoned from his



arm-chair to the rescue. "We will have away thy cold; thou shalt go to the wars in a gown," was all the concession to his infirmities that the right honourable tribune could procure, as he left his chamber. But even he, in his retreat, had smelled the smell of disunion; and before ever he met his colleagues, he commenced a little independent rhetoric in Birmingham, and endeavoured to make capital for himself. His temper has suffered severely through his illness, if we may judge from the outbreaks that have come before the public. The style in which he descended upon that unlucky parson in Cheshire, and afterwards upon Sir Charles Adderley, was absolutely rabid. With Mr Bright thus graciously disposed, and Mr Lowe, and Mr Gladstone, all ranged round the same board, one may imagine the sweet counsel they would take together. Mr Gladstone does not bear the contradictions of either saints or sinners with equanimity; and so it may have been that dark thoughts arose in his mind, and have been coming and going any time since the November fogs set in.

The divisions in the Cabinet only reflected the divisions out of doors. Of the majority returned in 1868 there still remained between sixty and seventy voices; but these were forgetting their mission to "vote for Mr Gladstone," and gathering into disaffected knots under sectional leaders. Relations with the Vatican were very unsatisfactory: the old pact was broken; and it was questionable whether the proud leader on the one side would have accepted, or on the other side would have granted, a Concordat. While these troubles and dissensions were paralyzing action, the Conservatives, on their part, were going in and winning whenever there was a chance of appealing to the people. Yet,

with all this, we firmly believe that Mr Gladstone still intended to meet the old Parliament on the 5th of February, and that he had conned his budget accordingly. Something or other, however, seems to have occurred about the 23d of January which changed all this — which showed him that there were presumptuous spirits powerful enough to insist on helping to cut out the work of the session. The Queen's speech may have been the composition over which they quarrelled. Then, probably, it was, that the captain, seeing that he could no longer command the ship in the old fashion, wildly resolved to scuttle her; and risk the sinking of all hands together. This hypothesis, be it remarked, imputes no deliberate deception, nor fixed intention of any kind; only an impetuous action by no means inconsistent with what we know of the right honourable gentleman's character. It may be that he thought the people, when it came to this, would throw him a rope, and give to him personally an assurance of their support, which would enable him to re-establish a dictatorship; and more especially might this be the result if the dissolution should be sudden and the election hurried. If the trick should succeed, well: if not, it was but precipitating his fall, going by the run instead of going inch by inch; he was at any rate executing summary justice on persons who had been guilty of the unpardonable offence of lifting up their heels against him. Should this be as we suppose, there will soon be evidence in support of the idea. Mr Gladstone has not hitherto forgiven political confederates with whom he has broken; and we may discover in many ways that some bitter feuds have begun. But to return to the dissolution. Mr Gladstone did not intend to extinguish himself if any arts could save

him ; so, besides making a night attack, he brought out some shreds of his unpublished budget by way of cry. We were allowed to see one or two items, which, exhibited by themselves, were expected to look captivating. It is now admitted on all sides that the offer to abolish the income-tax and to readjust other taxes was a blunder and something worse. It was a blunder in itself, as not effectual to the attainment of the object proposed ; and it was an unfaithful use of his opportunities as Chancellor of the Exchequer to flash before the eyes of the people a lure of this kind as an election bribe. If the Minister and the people may settle the budget between them, what need is there for the vigilance of Parliament to control our finance ? This, although allowance may be claimed for it as an act of desperation, is nevertheless highly reprehensible. We cannot allow that such important matters are to be snatched from the control of Parliament because a Minister has brought his party and himself to the verge of shipwreck. If there be one function which more than another appertains exclusively to the House of Commons, it is the discussing and ordering of our burdens and expenditure. What sort of public servant, then, is he who, to serve his personal ends, or at best the ends of his party, endeavours to influence the popular mind by financial schemes, hatched in his own brain, and to which Parliament has not had opportunity of giving even the slightest consideration ? It is an unfortunate truth that Mr Gladstone's blunders are mostly associated with encroachments upon the laws or upon the usages of the Legislature. As he has been blundering through the last five years, it was only natural, probably, that he should blunder to the end. But how do these repeated blunders agree with the assertion so frequently made, that

Mr Gladstone is eminently fitted for a party leader ? We can point to yet another blunder in Mr Gladstone's manifesto. After making his night attack, offering his bribe, and using every art to beguile the electors of their votes, he had the indiscretion to write : " These, I admit, are general declarations. Their whole value depends upon their future and practical development. On this subject I will frankly allow that the question is for the moment one of confidence." Why, what insanity was this ! It was recalling the people to an exercise of common-sense after having taken so much pains to lead them to folly. It was stirring up, at the most inopportune of moments, the memory of 1868, the broken promises, the abused confidence.

In brief, Mr Gladstone played badly, and lost. Ever since the beginning of 1869 he has been playing badly, and losing. He had then a majority of over a hundred votes to alienate. He has alienated them all, and has now got into a minority—a large minority, but a large minority where he once had a large majority. Are Conservatives dissatisfied that his loss is not greater ? let them be comforted on that account. If, by a sudden and overwhelming outburst, the nation had swept away Mr Gladstone and his colleagues, we might, with reason, have anticipated a reaction. As happened to the eyes of the man in Thessaly, another outburst might have swept them in again. But the disintegration of their party has been going on with the steady regularity of a geological process ; yea, and will go on. Any who respect our opinion will remember that we have said more than once, that all that was wanted for the overthrow of Mr Gladstone's and Mr Bright's influence was that the country should have time to become acquainted with those gentle-



men. Well, the country knows them at last well enough to reject them from being rulers; but it will know them better, and they will sink lower anon. They will sound the very bass string of humility yet, we predict. And that our predictions do sometimes come to pass, is this day proved by what we said of Mr Gladstone as long ago as when he was passing the Ballot Act. "If Mr Gladstone," we said, "deludes himself with the idea that secret voting will at all prolong his tenure of power, the sooner he dispels it the better. He has marred his work too effectually for it to be of the least consequence how the votes of the people may be taken. We will guarantee him against a majority in the House of Commons, let the voting be by any method that he can devise."\* And while we are on the subject of our forecasts of Mr Gladstone's break-down, let us say that we almost, if not quite alone, steadily set forth, ever since the beginning of the American complication, how Mr Gladstone was destroying his party and his reputation, and how his incapacity must lead to disgrace. For this consistent expression of opinion we got plenty of ridicule and abuse; but though many may have had confidence in us, few took the trouble to express that confidence. We appeal now to the candour of our countrymen, and ask them whether all that we predicted of Mr Gladstone's decline has not come to pass, and whether we did not take that right honourable gentleman's measure correctly. Our estimates of him were said to be calumnious, actuated by political hatred, and we know not what beside; but we did not falter in our criticism, and the public has at length come round

to our opinion. Of course, if we persisted when people condemned our opinion as unjust, we have nothing to retract, now that time has amply justified our appraisal. We have taken, we hope, a not unimportant part in exposing one of the most specious delusions that ever were practised upon a people, and our reward must be the reflection that we have done our duty.

Spite of Mr Gladstone's arts and his manoeuvres, the battle has gone against him. If he fancied that the people would strengthen him against his rebellious colleagues, he greatly deceived himself. They would not listen to his promises, nor look at the bait which he dangled before them, but quietly proceeded to vote into office the party which has opposed all his acts. Have the five years of office increased, then, or diminished, the value which the people set upon Mr Gladstone? Assuredly they have diminished it. The elections, as Mr Disraeli truly remarked, did not turn upon finance, but upon the past deeds of the Ministry; and we venture to go a step further than this, and to say that the elections turned upon the character of the Ministry, once exalted almost to heaven, now brought down to a considerably lower level. When we have praised a man inordinately, and predicted great things of him, it galls us sorely if we find him fall far short of our estimate and discredit our selection before all the world. Disappointment, we should say, is the sentiment most potent in bringing about the present action of the electors. The idol of clay is being pelted, because it pretended to be an idol of gold. Secondly, the history of the Administration, dating from the Lancashire stumpings, and the promises then made, is a bitter recollection

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\* *Vide* 'Blackwood's Magazine' for March 1872: Art.—"Ministers before Parliament."

to the British people: national humiliation, increased expenditure, Ireland made only ten times sicker by her medicine, a deteriorated army and navy, the Legislature over-riden, the laws tampered with—these are injuries which have sunk deep into the national mind, to say nothing of the numerous jobs, the paltry economy, and the insolence of office. Thirdly, the uncertainty as to the intentions of the Ministers where they would stop, or whether they would stop anywhere, has latterly worked ruinously, more especially since they have been so ill-advised as to threaten and challenge different interests. The answer to the uncalled-for gibe about “fat with charities, gorged with charities, bloated with charities,” has been the return of three Conservatives for the City of London!

Now that the people are getting some insight into the capacity of the late leader of the Liberal party, they must be astounded (as we were astounded long ago) at the rashness on the one part, and the hardness on the other, which could unite the Liberal sections under such leadership. Putting aside the few who enlisted under the denominations of Old Whigs and Moderate Liberals, the so-called party was made up of the most wild and lawless tribes of the political world, fierce, sudden, revengeful, headstrong, unreflecting. To gather such elements into one, and gain the control of them, required practical knowledge and practical qualities of the highest order; and it was attempted by a student who knew the world only through books—a clever and learned man, if you will, but not the sort of person to win the obedience of rugged natures. It was a necessity that the party, so led, should be

broken up as it is this day. It will find another leader; and Mr Gladstone, we hope, will find some line in which he can really distinguish himself. The party, no doubt, will strengthen itself again, and be once more formidable in politics; but for Mr Gladstone, as a politician, the knell, we fancy, has rung. Neither in the public interest can a wish be felt that this should be otherwise. Looking to his antecedents—remembering how he has worked round the compass from ultra-Tory to ultra-Radical—he, prospering, would be the most noxious example to those who are entering into active life. It is not desirable that the young should see tergiversation, and a constant adherence to the winning side, crowned with glory and honour. What encouragement could there be for constancy or fidelity, if the highest rewards were seen to be obtainable by turning one's coat? No; we are persuaded that things as they now are are best for Mr Gladstone, and for others also. During the last six months he has probably become a wiser man than he ever was before; and his wisdom will perhaps bring with it a feeling of repulsion for coarse uneducated Radicals, a feeling which the Radicals will not be slow to reciprocate. In political life there is no further course open to him. When, having quarrelled with almost every other political persuasion, he joined that which was led by Mr Bright, he reached, as we told him in time past, his widest stretch of popularity: after that he must needs decrease.\* It is to be hoped that henceforth he will devote himself to some quiet pursuit wherein he is able to excel, and by following which he may yet command the respect of us all. We shall be excessively glad whenever

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\* *Vide* ‘Blackwood's Magazine’ for March 1872: Art.—“Ministers before Parliament,” p. 387.



he may allow us to drop him out of our political articles, and to do him honour in the pages which we devote to scientific and literary subjects.

As to his following, or what he claimed as such, we hope that the Moderate Liberals (who are probably the Old Whigs of the eighteenth century) will find that they have more in common with us than with any section of the broken Radical party. The Old Whigs do not desire to destroy the Constitution or the Church any more than we do; they do not advocate godless education; they have no taste for wild theories, and not much for confiscation. There is not one of the Radical sections with which they would not find themselves at bitter feud. Already they have, for party's sake, allowed themselves to be dragged much farther than they approve on the road to revolution. There must be a halting-place somewhere; and now that there is no *quasi*-Liberal Government, allegiance to which they must not refuse under pain of being voted perfidious, the occasion seems suitable for ranking themselves under the same banners as those who in reality most nearly coincide with them in policy. There need be no difference between Moderate Liberals and the supporters of Mr Disraeli's Government.

We own ourselves to have been surprised by the sudden occurrence of the dissolution; but as to the consequence of it—to wit, the result of the election—no one will expect us to be surprised. We are in the position of a billiard-player who has scored, having previously named his stroke. Oftentimes, and from long ago, we have said without hesitation what the result of a general election would be. We did not desire to hasten the appeal to the country, because we felt that it was of more importance that the people should be surfeited with the virtue and exploits of the Liberal

Ministry, than that the Conservatives should at once accede to power. But now an election has come in the necessary course of things, and the day of the Radicals is over. Every man in the land can once more draw his breath freely. The course of spoliation has suddenly been arrested. Sensational legislation, too, has, it is to be hoped, come to an end. The unquiet sects that have for years been brawling as if the island had been made for them alone, will subside once more into silence, and relieve us of the consciousness of their existence. They can no longer hope to embarrass Government, or to propose their terms to Ministers; for a united party of order, stronger than any of them, and stronger than all of them put together, has been called by the voice of the country to the conduct of affairs. Atheists, anarchists, Ultramontanes, all the sort of them, will now be without the least chance of being able to interfere in matters of State. The Established Church of England will once more have a season of rest. Political experiments already in progress will be fully proved before new schemes are set in motion. Education, all available means of it being fully utilised, will become general. These advantages we shall receive at once. But there is a legacy of less remediable difficulties handed over to the new Government by their predecessors, to deal with which will require the profoundest attention of the wisest heads in the Cabinet. We cannot undo in a moment the mischief that a Liberal Government has done in Ireland. The spectre of Home Rule which they raised, but could not lay, remains still to perplex and obstruct. Our foreign policy must be lifted out of the mire in which it is sunk. Our colonies, our army, our navy must be looked to, and made once more to believe in the equitable

feelings and the favourable regard of the State. In time all this will be done, no doubt; but after such serious blundering, cures cannot be effected on the instant.

From what we have said now, and from what we have been saying for the last three years, it may be inferred that we think the action of the electors easy to be accounted for. Some of our contemporaries, however, not caring to look at simple and evident facts, are casting about in all directions and discovering reasons, until reasons are as plentiful as blackberries. Several have gone to Athens for an idea, and affirmed that the people was tired of hearing Aristides called the Just. If, as we suppose, they mean by Aristides Mr Gladstone's Ministry, a little reflection would show them that the lure of a classical illustration has led them some way towards an absurdity. We don't recollect that the Administration in question was ever called "the Just." In its early days, "the Divine" or "the Immaculate" was more like its appellation. But those days have long passed; and for the last year or two, if we recollect aright, "jobbers" or "deceivers" has been the name bestowed, not by Conservatives alone, but by the press and people generally. So that any voter who may have been nauseated by a good name given to the Ministry has had plenty of time to recover since any such imputation was levelled at them. Beer, too, is exalted to the honour of being the prime cause of the great change; and this, we trust, the people will recollect when it may be found convenient to woo them again, and blandishments about "own flesh and blood," and so on, may be slavered about. Men who have been thought capable of exercising the franchise

in the interests of beer-sellers and beer-consumers alone, may have cross answers to make to the persons who have thus maligned them. The beer interest, no doubt, has been alarmed like every other; but most of us have been too deeply frightened concerning our own vocations to have had much sympathy to give to beer, even if it had been our nature to set our hearts in that direction. The fact is, that any wild explanation is resorted to, any admission is more tolerable, than saying with us, "MR GLADSTONE'S GOVERNMENT IS A FAILURE."\*

Two years, we understand, is the time which a Conservative Government is to last. It will require that time to re-cement the Liberal elements, effect a postponement of particular crotchets and cries for the good of the party generally, and decide upon some great sensations with which to return to power. Such expectation might be reasonable if Liberals had been driven from office by some untoward accident, their policy being undeveloped and their measures half executed. But they have had five years of office with *carte blanche*; they have fairly worked out their mine; the results are before us—he that runs may read them; and the people have pronounced them *very bad*. Their labours have not been arrested by the machinations of their enemies; they have come to a standstill, because, with a large majority, they literally knew not how to move, but were driven to appeal to the people; the people have not thought them worth helping, and there they wither. But it is a hardy prophecy to say that these dead bones will live again in two years. Some of them will live again, no doubt; but they are like to get consumedly dry first.

\* Vide 'Blackwood's Magazine' for February 1871—Art., "New Year's Musings," last words of section "Dead Sea Fruit." See also our political articles for the last three years.



If the Radicals have suffered severely as a party, their leading men have suffered but little eclipse by the dissolution. Mr Gladstone was awarded a second place at Greenwich; Mr Goschen just escaped rejection in the City, but did escape; and most of the Gladstone Ministry whom one expected to see again, have, we think, secured seats in the Parliament of 1874. Polite, considerate Ayrton, though, has dropped through somehow; and Mr Headlam sits not. Mr Chichester Fortescue is, perhaps, their most serious loss. It is a perverse and untoward fate which makes him the scapegoat for the sins of the Administration. As little has been said against him as against any of the Government, and there is not the least reason to believe that his tendencies were very destructive. Like the stork whose neck the farmer wrung because he found him among some plundering cranes, Mr Fortescue has smarted for keeping bad company. His peerage may be a mark of Mr Gladstone's approbation and gratitude, but it does not do away with the disapprobation of his constituents. Outside the Ministry, two or three have failed whose seats we shall regret to see vacant. Prominent among these are Mr Fawcett and Mr Bouverie. If these two could have been saved, and Sir Charles Dilke and Mr Trevelyan got rid of, the new House would have been vastly improved by the change. But we cannot have everything of the best, and can only be very well satisfied with the House as the people have given it to us. We rejoice that Mr Forster's firm and outspoken opinions (so different in that respect from the opinions of any of his colleagues) have been rewarded by his being triumphantly returned to Parliament. It may come to light yet that he alone has stood in the gap, and kept alive the cause of religious education until it grew strong

again and could maintain itself. A service like this, God-fearing Englishmen ought never to forget. Nobody will mourn much, we presume, over Mr White, Mr Jacob Bright, and the rest of the small fry who are relegated to private life. On our side, we have lost the services—perhaps only for a time—of Sir John Pakington,—a weighty loss. With this exception, all our mighty men of valour, we think, resume their places. Mr W. H. Smith, the first Conservative to break the spell of Radical ascendancy in the metropolitan constituencies, has already made his mark, and will, we trust, still further signalise himself under a Conservative Administration. It has been a curious election in many ways, the humours of the ballot having been exhibited very freely. In a majority of cases, the general election has reversed the decisions come to at the accidental elections in the autumn. Stroud, Newcastle, Hull, Renfrewshire, furnish notable examples of this. We do not, on the whole, get such a numerous majority as was given to the other side in 1868, and has since been broken up by Mr Gladstone, but “’tis enough; ’twill serve.” And we mark with much satisfaction the Conservative gains north of the Tweed. The return of Sir W. Stirling Maxwell for Perthshire is an immense advantage; and our triumphs in Mid-Lothian, Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, &c., are both good in themselves and signs of improved opinion. May we have little cause in future to

“Moralise on the decay  
Of Scottish strength in modern day.”

Ireland seems to have been playing a little game of her own—neither Conservative nor Liberal—in this election. It is not likely to be attended with very great success. She might have left us. Mr Bernal

Osborne, who was "in excellent fooling" at the end of last session. We "could have better spared a better man."

It is worthy of note that on the occasion of this election John Bull nobly resisted a bait by which, at most times, in spite of warnings and of the perception of the point of the hook, he is easily taken. The offer of a perfectly charming budget could not captivate him; nay, though he was assured by his daily monitor that such an offer from the first financier living was almost too good luck for any community, and ought to be jumped at incontinently, John didn't see it at all; and we question whether he quite agrees in that opinion about the great financier, or whether he would be right if he did agree. Mr Gladstone has managed to acquire something of a reputation for getting up his figures well and mastering details; but he has done this chiefly by confusing and frightening everybody, so that his statements and calculations remained often unchallenged. But where his figures have been faced they have not proved so accurate. Remember how his facts and digits, with which he attempted to pass the Gaggling Bill, looked when taken to pieces by Professor Fawcett, Dr Playfair, Mr Lewis, Mr Johnston, and others. They were proved to be incorrect and slovenly. We do not in the least believe in the great financial genius; but, even if that were proved, we have had no benefit from it of late years. The match-tax, the five-quartered financial year, and the estimates in excess of what the country required, may be said to be Mr Lowe's blunders; but, if they were so, they were supported by the greatest living financier. In finance, as in everything else, we shall, now that his prestige has gone, have Mr Gladstone's superiority a little more impartially tested than has been usual hitherto.

Another sign of curious omen is that the aforesaid John has shown himself as indifferent to Mr Bright's return to office and to the benefits derivable therefrom—as he has been to the marvellous design for making five millions do the work of ten. Mr Bright's name is no longer a tower of strength. His return to office, broken in health, and unfit for hard work, has not had the slightest effect in postponing the catastrophe of the Cabinet, and it cannot but have had a bad effect upon his own reputation. How terribly these five months, added to his official life, have damaged all the attributes which used deservedly to make him respected and admired as a sturdy Englishman—his dogged conformity to his principles, his immutability of purpose, his outspoken, candid communications! No sooner had he got over his re-election at Birmingham, than prying people began to canvass some of his assertions there, which were found to be just a trifle at variance with facts. Then, again, he has shown us that he can tolerate a war when entered into by his own party; also, that his black brothers are sacred in his eyes only when Tories attempt to meddle with them. A few thousand of them killed off under a Radical warrant are of no account whatever. Mr Bright proved, too, that, spite of his written assertion to the contrary, he *could* give his countenance to a Ministry indulging habitually in an expenditure of over seventy millions. These backslidings, we may rely on it, are jealously noted by the people. Are the seductions of office so irresistible that even the virtue of Mr Bright is not proof against them? Or is it contact with Mr Gladstone that has taught Mr Bright to twist and shuffle? Alack, alack! "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Could Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright but have left behind them



unblemished political reputations, it had been some consolation to them in their fall, and a sweet reflection to the attached friends—even to the friend with the largest circulation in the world—whom they now leave comfortless. For we do not for a moment mean to say but that there are many who will drop tears over even Mr Gladstone's and Mr Bright's cruel and unlooked for fate :—

“ Ah, surely nothing dies but something mourns.

When Nero perished by the justest doom

That ever the destroyer yet destroyed,  
Amid the roar of liberated Rome,  
Of nations freed, and a world overjoyed,  
Some hand unseen strewed flowers upon  
his tomb.” \*

Also, it may be remembered, when the interesting Mr Quilp deceased, the boy who stood on his head wept for him.

As the admirers of the Liberal Administration cannot console themselves with the thought that their favourites' reputations are quite as good as they were, we find them vehemently protesting that at any rate the people are not acting as they are out of any good will to the Conservatives; this is not true. But, if it *were* true, what a testimony it is—what utter failure it indicates! The nation turns from the Gladstone Government with its brilliant programme and promises of reduced taxation, and prefers a Government of men to whom it is indifferent, and who have no programme! They who demonstrate this theorem prove a little too much for their own purpose. They are right, nevertheless, to the extent that the Liberal Government certainly wrought out its own condemnation. It had every advantage and every opportunity afforded it; yet it failed and fell—failed so utterly that, by the showing of its own friends, the electors,

in order to get rid of it, turn to a party with whom they have not much sympathy, and place at its disposal unrestrictedly the five millions which they will not intrust to Mr Gladstone with all his fine promises. Neither can it be urged that the choice which has been made is not free and uninfluenced; for has it not been arrived at by secret voting, the method which the disappointed party took so much pains to introduce? And this brings us to the consideration of a matter which is certainly not an evidence of sagacity in the outgoing Government.

It used to be an article of the Radical creed—we say *used to be*, since probably there is by this time a fast-spreading heresy on the point—that if only the electors could give their suffrages in strict secrecy, the elections must, as a general rule, be favourable to the Liberal side. Tory gold, Tory intimidation, employers' and other unwholesome influences (so the Radicals averred), were too powerful for that helpless victim, the voter. But throw the shield of the Ballot over him—leave him to his own conscience and his own inclination—and he would soon show how he revolted against Tory tyranny. For years and years the Ballot was rejected as being repugnant to English custom and English manliness; but in an evil hour of the year 1871 it entered into the heart of Mr Gladstone, who was rather at a loss for something sensational, to announce himself as the promoter of this much-desired method. It is difficult to say whether his friends or his foes were more startled by the new conviction. Vapouring about the Ballot on hustings, and so on, was very well when there was no chance of its becoming law; but its actual adoption, and the prospect of its operation within a few months,

their instincts taught Liberals to shrink from. They were unable, however, openly to oppose the secret voting bill, although it was known to be distasteful to all but a small fraction of them. The withdrawal of the measure would have been hailed by them with the greatest delight; but while it was persisted in by the Government they dared not give voice to their dislike of it. When it became evident, in 1872, that the Commons would be required to pass it a second time, the secret hope of many of its supporters in the Commons was that it would be rejected by the Lords. The Lords, however, for reasons of which we at the time expressed our approval, did pass the Bill, after having amended it. The Legislature showed some alarm at its own act; and the 'Times' wrote columns of nonsense about the country being hurried along by a dark fate, when in truth it was only hurried along by wilful and unscrupulous Ministers wielding what was at that time a blindly obedient majority. The apprehended evil, be it observed, was, that the electors, freed from all checks on their Liberal tendencies, would press on beyond the bounds of what the most advanced Liberal schemes recognised into the realms of anarchy and confusion. It was likely that the ballot might carry us too far in the Liberal direction, but, as to its not being favourable to the growth of Liberalism, such an idea never entered a Liberal brain. Well, the elections of 1868, effected by open voting, produced a Liberal majority in the House of Commons of from 100 to 120: the election of 1874 by the ballot has not produced a Liberal majority at all, but a Conservative majority of 50! Thus it seems that, in allowing themselves to be whipped up like hounds to the accomplishment of a work which they disapproved and disliked, the

Liberal majority of those days did its party an egregious service! The truth has been demonstrated that it was the Conservative feeling of the country which had been shackled and repressed by corrupt influences; and that, in seeking to counteract bribery, intimidation, and so on, the Liberals had been preparing a punishment for their own offences. It is a fair inference that if the ballot had been law in 1868, Mr Disraeli's expectations, derived from the Reform Act of 1867, would have then been fulfilled, and we should never have groaned under the Gladstone Government at all. If all the Liberal party can speak as fairly about the ballot as Mr Bright has done, and say that, favour what party it may, they still prefer it to open voting, we can only applaud so hearty an adherence to principle; but we are afraid that many of them, now cursing the ballot by their gods, are open to ridicule as having been caught in the trap set by themselves. We acquit Mr Gladstone of the remotest intention of doing either our side, or the cause of fair play, any good; but we are indebted to his blunders, if not to his goodwill. Will the next Radical prospectus recommend the extinction of the abominable and demoralising practice of secret voting, giving it precedence of the extinction of the House of Lords and the Established Church? We put the question as a thesis.

We have not heard of open complaints having been made against the Ballot by the trades' unions or by the Catholic priests; but we observe that it is stated in many quarters that both these domineering powers have found it to interfere with their designs. How the Irishman contrives to keep secrets from his priest we cannot guess. One of the reverend gentry let it be known the year before last that he would wring from the electors in the



confessional an account of how they had voted ; but this, certainly, is a degree of villainy to which priests do not generally attain. At any rate, the Home Rulers seem to have obtained many seats against the wishes of the priests ; and as neither Ultramontanes nor Home Rulers can have much weight in the Parliament just elected, it is as well that they should get up a little faction-feeling between them. Both may be quieter in consequence of this antagonism. As to the members who have revolted against the tyranny of unions having, under shelter of the Ballot, voted in disobedience of the mandates of the committees, we only hope that the story is true. The undue influences of Liberals, priests, and agitators all undermined, and men left free to follow their Conservative inclinations, are happy results for us certainly ; but what sort of a cranium can it have been that could so effectually provide for counter-acting all the sinister agencies by which the Radical party had hitherto won ?

As a proof how Conservatism has struck its roots into the whole land, we may point to the almost general expectation of a change of Government which has prevailed for many months. There was not only a consciousness among ourselves that we were gaining ground, but our opponents evidently felt, and many of them confessed, that they were losing ground. The speeches of Ministers during the autumn, and the coldness of the audiences to whom they were poured out, were indications of the manner in which the people was being moved ; and then the appeals to posterity made by the Radical press sounded very much as if they thought that appeals to the existing generation would not be effectual. There was a considerable loss of temper among our contemporaries, which also indicated

that their cause was failing in spite of them, and they could do nothing but snarl at the winning side. We have a few snaps and gnashings of the teeth directed at ourselves to acknowledge ; but we are in much too good-humour to-day to utter more than an acknowledgment. We cannot turn aside from the march of a triumphal procession to "strike at wretched kernes," who no doubt are smarting sufficiently already. Yes, the signs of our advent to power were many and were generally perceived ; but we doubt whether our adversaries ever dreamt of a large Conservative majority. We were to come in for a few months just to sober the most impetuous of the Radicals, and give them leisure to reconsolidate their phalanx. But we appear to have come for a longer spell than perhaps will be altogether agreeable to them ; and this is proved by the circumstances of the accession. Without any scheming or agitating on our part, the very occasion of our triumph having been offered us by the sharp practice of our adversaries, the people have called to power the Conservative party, unshackled, unpledged, unquestioned. A greater mark of confidence it would be impossible to give. So entire is the trust reposed that some organs of the baffled sections are already delighting themselves with the thought that the Tories, being allowed to take their will, will soon make the country feel what an imprudence it has committed. But there is no danger of the country being driven to repentance. We are not in the least disposed to abuse the generous confidence of the nation ; on the contrary, we are, by the frankness of the call, only the more strongly bound to postpone party advantage, and to labour for the general welfare. This is one of those epochs in the nation's history when the working of all the machi-

nery of government and legislation seems to be exactly according to the plan of the constitution. The people, entirely free to choose, elect to be ruled by Conservative statesmen; and thus we have all the legitimate powers of the State—Crown, Church, Aristocracy, and Commons—banded together and presenting a front which may well overawe the disobedient at home, and appal our enemies abroad; while the rebellious, the disorderly, the ungodly, the idolatrous, the discontented, though gathered into a mass of heterogeneous elements, are unable to effect anything against the united party of order.

The leader who is to replace unfortunate Mr Gladstone has shown himself to be, if not eager for power, at least competent to wield it. Mr Disraeli is the author of the franchise under which the harmonious disposition of the powers of government to which we have adverted has been brought about. His sagacity in enfranchising the masses has by this very election been amply vindicated; while his moderation in declining to take office with the Parliament called in 1868 has likewise been shown to be far-seeing and statesmanlike. Thus at the very commencement of his premiership the nation receives an earnest of his ability. His remarks, too, concerning the impossibility of cheap government for a country like this have been entirely justified by the finance of his adversaries, who, with control of the public expenditure for five years, have found it impracticable to reduce the public outlay, though they had boasted loudly of their intention so to do. He undertakes a difficult task, but he enters upon it credited with the ability and the will to command success. How to deal with Ireland will be his real difficulty; and the difficulty which our enemies exultingly assert to lie

in his path is to regulate finance like Mr Gladstone, who, it seems, is a master in that line. Since no Minister has yet succeeded in ruling Ireland except by force, it will be no disgrace if Mr Disraeli should fail to bring her back to loyalty and order. Everything which his predecessors could do to make this attempt difficult has been done. The Romish priesthood has been flattered and pampered into arrogance which will neither submit to authority nor listen to reason. The problem Mr Disraeli will have to solve is, how to convince the Irish people of the desire of the Legislature to improve their condition, and at the same time to let it be seen that nothing will be done to favour the views of the crafty ecclesiastics at Rome. Neither, probably, will this be found so hard of solution as at first sight it appears. The difficulty is great or little according to the mind of the people of Great Britain; it is not a constant force residing in the Irish priesthood or the Irish people. When the British mind is pretty well made up as to how Ireland should be dealt with, the obstructive or resisting power of Ireland is very small indeed. It is when England is divided in opinion, and there is a misguided party which talks of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas—more especially it is when English Ministers condescend to purchase the support of Popish priests—that the opportunity arises for Ireland to be politically important: then she is formidable indeed. But there arrive now and then periods when Great Britain, having, with great loss to herself and damage to her institutions, taken much pains to conciliate Ireland, finds her still obdurate and rebellious; then Britain begins to get crusty. Such a period occurred after all the Whig traffic with O'Connell between 1835 and 1845. It was plain at length that, get



what she might, Ireland would still be discontented, and thereupon this island left off whining over the supposed Irish grievances, and expressed a strong opinion that Ireland might perhaps benefit by being less indulged and finding less ready sympathy. Once this current of opinion set in, the whole of the power of agitation collapsed. O'Connell himself was brought to trial and convicted; he lost, and never afterwards recovered, his popularity and influence; and the whole proceeds of the trade called Irish agitation fell to nothing at all. But history, as we know, repeats itself. Once more, after an interval, the business of agitation recommenced, and once more an English Government was base enough to traffic in Popish votes. England was induced to do great violence to her wishes and her conscience, in the hope of relieving the so-called wrongs of Ireland. But Ireland only waxed more exacting for the silly indulgence. Britain is once more indignant at the ungrateful return made for her kindness. She has dismissed the incapables who led her into the folly; and she stands now, with her eyes again opened, and her anger hot and general. We have very much the same political combination as when O'Connell was put down. If this tendency of the English mind be but sagely directed, a blow may be struck at priestly influence, the effects of which may be severe indeed. For Popery is in but a tottering state in countries where it is established. It is declining all over Europe; and it is absurd to suppose that, if judiciously resisted, it can exercise any great power in these islands. The talent of a new Administration independent of the Papist vote, will, we trust, invent some safe and efficacious method of dealing with Ireland before the mortified feeling of England has time to cool. We shall under-

stand the importance of crushing this Ultramontane clique, if we reflect on what certainly would have happened had Conservatives and Radicals been returned in nearly equal proportions. The Pope in that case might have turned the balance, and we should literally have had the interests of the country, so far as the House of Commons is concerned (which means to a very great extent), controlled by the priests in Rome. The decided action of the electors has delivered us from this peril; but what a peril it was, and how necessary it still is to take order for excluding the Popish hierarchy from such opportunity in future!

Concerning the finance of the new Administration, which is about to undergo the criticism of the first financial genius in the world, we confess to having but little anxiety. The first financial genius will, no doubt, attempt to overbear by a flood of words and by masses of figures; but our Ministers will take courage, and give him word for word, and follow him through his windings. If one pair of lungs is not equal to doing this, three or four pairs may work in reliefs. Once cease to be frightened by the quantity of the verbiage, and the first financier's objections will doubtless be easily met. His own calculations are not generally so unassailable that other people need flinch from his strictures. The great financial attraction for this 1874 hardly saw the light, as we know, when it was challenged by Baron Rothschild, and shown to be unsound. Figures, fortunately, do not admit of different readings or varying convictions. They are stubborn agents which refuse to tell their tale in more than one version. A steady adherence to their unambiguous expositions, and a patient, though perhaps trying and tedious, unwinding of the great financier's

sophisms and paradoxes, will be very apt to baffle that versatile genius.

We do not forget Mr Gladstone's ungenerous behaviour when her Majesty intrusted Mr Disraeli with the premiership in 1868, and we are pleased to see how Mr Disraeli's conduct at this juncture contrasts therewith. He has not attempted to raise a cry in the country; he has not gained power by an attack on Mr Gladstone's Administration; he has not offered himself as a doctor for Ireland, or as a notable economist; far less has he gone about the land running down his opponents as wasteful of the resources and insensible to the wishes of the people. He has bided his time, and now the people have called to him. There never was an accession to power less tainted by intrigue, or delusion, or self-commendation. We say again now what we lately said when discussing the right honourable gentleman's speech at Glasgow, that his candidature for the nation's favour has been such as no statesman, no Englishman, no gentleman, need be ashamed of. Office is no novelty to him, but office with such a fair start as this is what he has never known before. That the favouring gale will be advantageous to the ruled as well as to the rulers, we have not the slightest doubt. He is, at any rate, sure now of a fair trial; and we are sure to find out whether there be any sound statesmanship in his mind or no.

The list of the new Cabinet has quite come up to our expectation. True to the information which he gave to her Majesty in March, the Premier was prepared to submit most unexceptionable names immediately after receiving the command to do so. No doubt the other Ministerial offices will be equally well filled. Our younger men, owing to the long exclusion of the party from office, have had but little opportunity of acquiring

experience; but that is a defect which will soon be mended. The fame of a Lowe, an Ayrton, a Monsell, a Bruce, a Childers, does not in the least appal us, or make us dread the comparison of Mr Disraeli's future Cabinet with those great names, although it is hoped that none of the new Cabinet will distinguish themselves exactly in the same line as the great men whom we have named. As Lord Cairns will again sit on the Woolsack, we shall have a Lord-Chancellor who, in fitness for his judicial office and in Parliamentary talent, is second to no lawyer in the kingdom, if, indeed, he be not our very first. The Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Derby, will command some attention in the Upper House; and as the names of the Marquess of Salisbury and the Earl of Carnarvon also appear in the list of the Cabinet, we doubt whether much falling off will be perceptible on the Ministerial side of the House of Lords. Mr Hardy and Lord John Manners are still to be found in the House of Commons, and so are Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr Hunt. Sir John Pakington is not at present available, and we have with regret heard it said that he will not again offer himself as a public man. But Mr Cross will undoubtedly bring strength to the Council, and Mr Disraeli will lay his hand on some aspirants among the newly returned Conservatives, who will be quite able to fill the places of those who withdraw. Thus the offices have been or will be filled, notwithstanding all the forebodings of our talented rivals: the Government will do its work, too, in a style which may make pretenders to exceptional virtue and talent appear to be less valuable than they were thought to be a few years since. For we hope that five years of the Radicals have completely dispelled the illusion that all the integrity as well



as all the real ability of the country was to be found in Mr Gladstone's Cabinet. We took occasion lately to say that one effect of Mr Gladstone's rule was to completely bleach the characters of the Tories, so long and so unjustly aspersed. How it affected the reputation of Mr Gladstone himself, and of his colleagues, we have already said.

To the Conservatives of the United Kingdom Maga offers her warm congratulations on the splendid victory which they have achieved. She has suffered affliction with them, "worked and waited" with them, and fought beside them. In their darkest day she bade them not despair, but pointed ever to the glorious victory which Time must bring to them. Now that the battle has been won she joins in the general hand-shaking, tells over with her comrades the exertions, the prowess, the heroic acts of the combatants, adds her voice to the millions of voices that cheer for the great Conservative success. After so long a period of adversity—during which our ranks have remained unbroken and our hearts undismayed—we may give an hour or two to rejoicing, may reflect on our gallant struggle, may smile over its results of brilliant victory and solid advantage. It is not a doubtful or an unfruitful triumph that we have won. We have done more than driven back the cunning enemy who thought to take us unawares. To have baffled his insidious attack, and sent him back sore and disappointed, would have been something to boast of; but we met him on the field of his own choosing, grappled with him in the darkness under cover of which he attacked, and, spite of his advantages, his "appliances and means to boot," vanquished and drove him from the field. He was not a modest nor a generous foe; but we will leave him to his wounds and his chagrin, and survey, not the fallen adversary,

but the place of honour, the post of vantage, which we have obtained. Suddenly we have risen to be the dominant party in a mighty empire, whose affairs will be, probably for a lengthened period, conducted according to the maxims and principles which may be uppermost among us. Let us look well to those maxims and rules of action; let us take heed to the uses which we make of our opportunity; let us show that our long restriction to the shade has not been without its profit. Our enemies would rejoice if they saw us, in the first flush of our supremacy, seeking party advantages or pursuing ignoble objects. Let us labour for the general good, according to the high sense in which we understand that expression. We have received, unconditionally, a great trust from the people, and it behoves us to show ourselves deserving of such trust. We have always repudiated with scorn the character sought to be fastened on us by our enemies, of desiring to let the country stagnate in order that some few in possession of the good things of the world may enjoy their prosperity. Now is the time to show that we have a larger heart, a wider sympathy, than have been ascribed to us. Without condescending to flatter the populace or any portion of the people, we may show by our acts that our desires are not selfish. Word sympathy, whining phrases, self-abasement, are not the keys wherewith to unlock the affections of an independent community; but Englishmen will respond to gracious and considerate acts. Without quarrelling, without blustering even, it may be found practicable to brighten once again our national honour, and make the empire respected among the nations as of yore. The keen diplomatists and journalists who watch us so closely from the European continent and

from America must be made to perceive that it was in a great measure their base and subservient foreign policy which has caused Mr Gladstone and his friends to be ejected. They must not be left under the impression that such policy is national policy, or that the nation would tolerate a repetition of it. The leopard will lose his spots, we hope, before Britons will lose their pride in the country's honour; and rival nations will see that the base surrenders were the acts of a miserable Government alone, whom the people have punished for this and other offences. Those who have committed to us the initiative in politics can never expect that we will be false to the national religion, or that we would tolerate godless education; but to spread education, to bring the first rays of knowledge to them who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, is a design which may be accomplished with more or less fulness, and which is worthy of our best exertions. The health of the people, again, is a subject on which no amount of consultation can be superfluous. We do not allow, and we never did allow, ourselves to be indifferent to "peace, retrenchment, and reform;" but we claim to pursue all these ends with reason and prudence, not sacrificing for them other things which should be quite as precious to us, nor imagining that by simply decreeing the reign of certain virtues we benefit mankind in the least, or establish any claim upon their gratitude. The disintegration of the empire we shall unequivocally resist, and in so doing we expect to

receive the support of every loyal subject. We need not in the least doubt that the leaders of our party will be found in all respects of equal capacity to those whom they supersede; it has been a favourite fashion to depreciate our statesmen, but it is wonderful how suddenly a man's abilities are discerned after he has been stamped with office.

We may with an honest heart rejoice, and ask others to participate in our joy; for we come to rob and injure none. Servants of the State, long oppressed and threatened, will, we hope, be glad at our coming. We do not wish to blind men's eyes, or to leave the least doubt on their minds as to what our opinions are, or as to the extent to which those opinions would influence our legislative action. We believe that we may do much good, and hope that we shall have the grace to do it. But all that we may do will be consistent with the great principles and sentiments which we have always set before us. There is more significance in these days than there has been for many a year in the name Conservative. Nothing is too exalted to be attacked; there is nothing at which the most contemptible railers have not presumed to direct their insults. But scorners and revolutionists will gain no countenance from us. There are things which we hold to be sacred and inviolable; they are the foundation of our policy, the watchwords of our party, and with them we conclude the first address which we have published this many a year under a Conservative Government — CROWN, CHURCH, LEGISLATURE, CONSTITUTION.



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ALICE LORRAINE.

A TALE OF THE SOUTH DOWNS.

PART II.—CHAPTER IX.

THE room known as the Astrologer's (by the maids, less reverently entitled the "star-gazer's closet") was that old eight-sided, or lantern, chamber, which has been mentioned in the short account of the Carian sage and his labours. He had used it alternately with his other quarters in the Chancton Ring; for this had outlook of the rising, as the other had of the setting stars. At the eastern end of the house, it stood away from roofs and chimney-tops, commanding the trending face of hill, and the amplitude of the world below, from north-west round the north and east, to the rising point of Fomahault.

To this room Alice now made her way, as if she had no time to spare. With quick, light steps, she passed through the hall, and then the painted library, as it was called from some old stained glass—and at the further end she entered a little room with double doors, her father's favourite musing-place. In

the eastern end of this quiet chamber, and at the eastern end of all, there was a low and narrow door. This was seldom locked, because none of the few who came so far would care to go any further. For it opened to a small landing-place, dimly lit, as well as damp, and leading to a newel staircase, narrow, and made of a chalky flint, angular and irregular.

Alice stopped to think a little. All things looked so uninviting that she would rather do without them. Surely now that the sun had departed—whether well or otherwise—some other time would do as nicely for going on with the business. There was nothing said of any special hurry, so far as she could remember; and what could be a more stupid thing than to try to unlock an ancient door without any light for the keyhole? She had a very great mind to go back, and to come again in the morning.

She turned with a quick turn

towards the light, and the comfort, and the company; then suddenly she remembered how she had boasted of her courage; and who would be waiting to laugh at her, if she came back without her errand. Fearing further thought, she ran like a sunset cloud up the stairway.

Fifty or sixty steps went by her before she had time to think of them; a few in the light of loopholes, but the greater part in governed gloom, or shadowy mixture flickering. Then at the top she stopped to breathe, and recover her wits, for a moment. Here a long black door repelled her—a door whose outside she knew pretty well, but had no idea of the other side. Upon this, she began to think again; and her thoughts were almost too much for her.

With a little sigh that would have moved all imaginable enemies, the swiftly sensitive girl called up the inborn spirit of her race, and her own peculiar romance. These in combination scarcely could have availed her to turn the key, unless her father had happened to think of oiling it with a white pigeon's feather.

When she heard the bolt shoot back, she made the best of a bad affair. "In for a penny, in for a pound;" "faint heart is fain;" "two bites at a cherry;" and above all, "noblesse oblige." With all these thoughts to press her forward, in she walked, quite dauntlessly.

And lo, there was nothing to frighten her. Everything looked as old and harmless as the man who had loved them all; having made or befriended them. His own little lathe, with its metal bed (cast by himself from a mixture of his own, defying the rust of centuries), wanted nothing more than dusting, and some oil on the bearings. And the speculum he had worked so hard at, for a reflecting telescope—partly his own idea, and

partly reflected (as all ideas are) some years ere the time of Gregory—the error in its grinding, which had driven him often to despair, might still be traced by an accurate eye through the depth of two hundred dusty years. Models, patterns, moulds, and castings,—many of which would have shown how slowly our boasted discoveries have grown,—also favourite tools, and sundry things past out of their meaning, lay about among their fellows, doomed alike to do no work, because the man who had kept them moving was shorter-lived than they were.

Now young Alice stood among them, in a reverential way. They were, of course, no more than other things laid by to rust, according to man's convenience. And yet she could not make up her mind to meddle with any one of them. So that she only looked about, and began to be at home with things.

Her eager mind was always ready to be crowded with a rash, young interest in all things. It was the great fault of her nature that she never could perceive how very far all little things should lie beneath her notice. So that she now had really more than she could contrive to take in all at once.

But while she stood in this surprise, almost forgetting her errand among the multitude of ideas, a cloud above the sunset happened to be packed with gorgeous light. Unbosoming itself to the air in the usual cloudy manner, it managed thereby to shed down some bright memories of the departed one. And hence there came a lovely gleam of daylight's afterthought into the north-western facet of the old eight-sided room. Alice crossed this glance of sunset, wondering what she was to do, until she saw her shadow wavering into a recess of wall. There, between the darker windows to the right hand of the



door, a little hover of refraction, striking upon reflection, because it was fugitive, caught her eyes. She saw by means of this a keyhole in a brightened surface, on a heavy turn of wall that seemed to have no meaning. In right of discovery, up she ran, passed her fingers over a plate of polished Sussex iron, and put her key into the hole, of course.

The lock had been properly oiled perhaps, and put into working order sometimes, even within the last hundred years. But still it was so stiff that Alice had to work the key both ways, and with both hands, ere it turned. And even after the bolt went back, she could not open the door at once, perhaps because the jamb was rusty, or the upper hinge had given forward. Whatever the hesitation was, the girl would have no refusal. She set the key crosswise in the lock, and drew one corner of her linen handkerchief through the loop of it, and then tied a knot, and, with both hands, pulled. Inasmuch as her handkerchief was not made of gauze, or lace, or gossamer, and herself of no feeble material, the heavy door gave way at last, and everything lay before her.

"Is that all? oh, is that all?" she cried, in breathless disappointment, and yet laughing at herself. "No jewels, no pearls, no brooches, or buckles, or even a gold watch! And the great Astrologer must have foreseen how sadly, in this year of our reckoning, I should be longing for a gold watch! Alas! without it, what is the use of being 'brave and beautiful'? Here is nothing more than dust, mouldy old deeds, and a dirty cushion!"

Alice had a great mind at first to

run back to her father and tell him that, after all, there was nothing found that would be worth the carrying. And she even turned, and looked round the room, to support this strong conclusion. But the weight of ancient wisdom (pressed on the young imagination by the stamp of mystery) held her under, and made her stop from thinking her own thoughts about it. "He must have known better, of course, than I do. Only look at his clever tools! I am sure I could live in this room for a week, and never be afraid of anything."

But even while she was saying this to herself, with the mind in command of the heart, and a fine conscientious courage, there came to her ears, or seemed to come, a quiet, low, unaccountable sound. It may have been nothing, as she tried to think, when first she began to recover herself; or it may have been something quite harmless, and most easily traced to its origin. But whatever it was, in a moment it managed to quench her desire to live in that room. With quick hands, now delivered from their usual keen sense of grime, she snatched up whatever she saw in the cupboard, and banged the iron door, and locked it, with a glance of defiant terror over the safer shoulder first, and then over the one that was nearer the noise.

Then she knew that she had done her duty very bravely; and that it would be a cruel thing to expect her to stay any longer. And, so to shut out all further views of anything she had no right to see, she slipped back the band of her beautiful hair; and, under that cover, retreated.

#### CHAPTER X.

At this very time there happened to be a boy of no rank, and of un-

known order, quietly jogging homeward. He differed but little from

other boys ; and seemed unworthy of consideration, unless one stopped to consider him. Because he was a boy by no means virtuous, or valiant ; neither gifted by nature with any inborn way to be wonderful. Having nothing to help him much, he lived among the things that came around him, to his very utmost ; and he never refused a bit to eat, because it might have been a better bit. And now and then, if he got the chance (without any more in the background than a distant view of detection), he had been imagined perhaps to lay hand upon a stray trifle that would lie about, and was due, but not paid, to his merits. Nobody knew where this boy came from, or whether he came at all indeed, or was only the produce of earth or sky, at some improper conjunction. Nothing was certain about him ; except that there he was ; and he meant to stay ; and people, for the most part, liked him. And many women would have been glad to love him, in a protective way ; but for the fright by all of them felt, by reason of the magistrates.

These had settled it long ago, at every kind of session, that this boy (though so comparatively honest) must not be encouraged much. He had such a manner of looking about, after almost anything ; and of making the most of those happy times when luck embraces art ; above all, he had such exhaustive knowledge of apple - trees, and potato-buries, and cows that wanted milking, as well as of ticklish trout, and occasional little ducks that had lost their way—that after long-tried lenience, and allowance for such a neglected child, justice could no longer take a large and wholesome view of “Bonny.”

Bonny held small heed of justice (even in the plural number) whenever he could help it. The nature of his birth and nurture had been

such as to make him take an outside view of everything. If people liked him, he liked them, and would be the last to steal from them ; or at any rate would let them be the last for him to steal from. His inner meaning was so honest, that he almost always waited for some great wrong to be done to him, before he dreamed of making free with almost anybody's ducks.

Widely as he was known, and often glanced at from a wrong point of view, even his lowest detractor could not give his etymology. Many attempted to hold that he might have been called, in some generative outburst, “Bonnie,” by a Scotchman of imagination. Others laughed this idea to scorn, and were sure that his right name was “Boney,” because of his living in spite of all terror of “Bonyparty.” But the true solution probably was (as with all analytic inquiries) the third,—that his right name was “Bony,” because his father, though now quite a shadowy being, must have, at some time or other, perhaps, gone about crying, “Rags and Bones, oh !”

These little niceties of origin passed by Bonny as the idle wind. He was proud of his name, and it sounded well ; and wherever he went the ladies seemed to like him, as an unknown quantity. Also (which mattered far more to him) the female servants took to him. And, with many of these, he had such a way, that it found him in victuals, perhaps twice in a week.

Nevertheless, he was forced to work as hard as could be, this summer. The dragging weight of a hopeless war (as all, except the stout farmers, now were beginning to consider it) had been tightening, more and more, the strain upon the veins of trade, and the burden of the community.

This good boy lived in the side of a hill, or of a cliff (as some might call it), white and beautiful



to look at from a proper distance. Here he had one of those queer old holes, which puzzle the sagest antiquary, and set him in fiercest conflict with the even sager geologist. But in spite of them all, the hole was there; and in that hole lived Bonny.

Without society, what is life? Our tenderest and truest affections were not given us for naught. The grandest of human desires is to have something or other to wallop; and fate (in small matters so hard upon Bonny) had known when to yield, and had granted him this; that is to say, a donkey.

A donkey of such a clever kind, and so set up with reasoning powers and a fine heart of his own, that all his conclusions were almost right, until they were beaten out of him. His name was "Jack," and his nature was of a level and sturdy order, resenting wrongs, accepting favours, with all the teeth of gratitude, and braying (as all clever asses do) at every change of weather. His personal appearance also was noble, striking, and romantic; and his face reminded all beholders of a well-coloured pipe-bowl upside down. For all his muzzle and nose were white, as snowy white as if he always wore a nosebag newly floured from the nearest windmill. But just below his eyes, and across the mace of his jaws, was a ring of brown, and above that not a speck of white, but deepening into cloudy blackness throughout all his system. Then (like the crest of Hector) rose a menacing frontlet of thick hair, and warlike ears as long as horns, yet genially revolving; and body and legs, to complete the effect, conceived in the very best taste to match.

These great virtues of the animal found their balance in small foibles. A narrow-minded, self-seeking vein, —a too vindictive memory, an obstinacy more than asinine, no sense of honour, and a habit of treating

too many questions with the teeth or heels. These had lowered him to his present rank; as may be shown hereafter.

To any worked and troubled mind, escaping into the country, it would have been a treat to happen (round some corner suddenly, when the sun throws shadows long) upon Bonny and his jackass. In the ripe time of the evening, when the sun is at his kindest, and the earth most thankful, and the lines of every shadow now are well-accustomed; when the air has summer hope of never feeling frost again; and every bush, and tump, and hillock quite knows how to stand and look; when the creases of yellow grass, and green grass, by the roadside, leave themselves for explanation, till the rain shall settle it; and the thick hedge, in the calm air, cannot rustle, unless it holds a rabbit or a hare at play,—when all these things, in their quiet way, guide the shadowy lines of evening, and the long lanes of farewell, what can soothe the spirit more than the view of a boy on a donkey?

Bonny, therefore, was in keeping with the world around him (as he always contrived to be) when he came home on Jack, that evening, from a long day's work at Shoreham. The lane was at its best almost, with all the wild flowers that love the chalk, mixed with those that hug the border where the chalk creams into loam. Among them Bonny whistled merrily, as his favourite custom was; to let the Pixies and the Fairies, ere he came under the gloom of the hill, understand that he was coming, and nobody else to frighten them.

Soothed with the beauty of the scene and the majesty of the sunset, Jack drew back his ears and listened drowsily to his master. "Britannia rule the Waves" was then the anthem of the nation; and as she

seemed to rule nothing else, though fighting very grandly, all patriotic Britons found main comfort in governing water.

The happiness of this boy and donkey was of that gleeful see-saw chancing, which is the heartiest of all. This has a snugness of its own, which nothing but poverty can afford, and luck rejoice to revel in. As a rich man hugs his shivers, when he has taken a sudden chill, and huddles in over a roaring fire, and boasts that he cannot warm himself, so a poor fellow may cuddle his home, and spread his legs as he pleases, for the sake of its very want of comfort, and the things it makes him think of; all to be hoped for by-and-by. And Bonny was so destitute that he had all the world to hope for.

He lived in a hole in the scarp of chalk, at the foot of the gully of Coombe Lorraine; and many of his delightful doings might have been seen from the lofty windows, if any one ever had thought it worth while to slope a long telescope at him. But nobody cared to look at Bonny, and scatter his lowly happiness—than which there is no more fugitive creature, and none more shy of inspection.

Being of a light and dauntless nature, Bonny kept whistling and singing his way, over the grass and through the furze, and in and out the dappled leafage of the summer evening; while Jack, with his brightest blinkings, picked the parts of the track that suited him. The setting sun was in their eyes, and made them wink every now and then, and threw the shadow of long ears, and walking legs, and jogging heads, here and there and anywhere. Also a very fine lump of something might in the shadows be loosely taken to hang across Jack in his latter parts, coming after Bonny's legs, and choice things stowed in front of them.

The meaning of this was that they had been making a very lucky long-shore day, at the mouth of the river Adur; and on their way home, had received some pleasing tribute to their many merits in the town of Steyning, and down the road. Jack had no panniers, for his master could not provide such luxuries; but he had what answered as well, or better—a long and trusty meal-sack, strongly stitched at the mouth, and slit for inlet some way down the middle. So that, as it hung well balanced over his sturdy quarters, anything might be popped in quickly; and all the contents must abide together, and churn up into fine tenderness.

As for Bonny himself, the shadows did him strong injustice, such as he was wont to take from all the world, and make light of. The shadows showed him a ragged figure, flapping and flickering here and there, and random in his outlines. But the true glow of the sunset, full upon his face, presented quite another Bonny. No more to be charged as a vagabond than the earth and the sun himself were; but a little boy who loved his home, such as it was, and knew it, and knew little else. Dirty, perhaps, just here and there, after the long dry weather—but if he had been ugly, could he have brought home all that dripping?

To the little fellow himself as yet the question of costume was more important than that of comeliness. And his dress afforded him many sources of pride and self-satisfaction. For his breeches were possessed of inexhaustible vitality, as well as bold and original colour, having been adapted for him by the wife of his great patron, Bottler the pigman, from a pair of Bottler's leggings, made of his own pigskin. The skin had belonged, in the first place, to a very remarkable boar, a thorough Calydonian hog, who



escaped from a farm-yard, and lived for months a wild life in St Leonard's Forest. Here he scared all the neighbourhood, until at last Bottler was invoked to arise like Meleager, and to bring his pig-knife. Bottler met him in single combat, slew him before he had time to grunt, and claiming him as the spoils of war, pickled his hams at his leisure. Also, he tanned the hide in his own yard, and made himself leggings as everlasting as the fame of his exploit.

With these was Bonny now indebted over most of his nether moiety. Shoes and stockings he despised, of course, but his little shanks were clean and red, while his shoulders and chest were lost in the splendour of a coachman's crimson waistcoat. At least they were generally so concealed, when he set forth in the morning, for he picked up plenty of pins, and showed some genius in arranging them: but after a hard day's work, as now, air and light would always reassert their right of entrance. Still, there remained enough of the mingled charm of blush and plush to recall in soft domestic bosoms bygone scenes, for ever past—but oh, so sweet among the trays!

To judge him, however, without the fallacy of romantic tenderness—the breadth of his mouth, and the turn of his nose, might go a little way against him. Still, he had such a manner of showing bright white teeth in a jocund grin, and of making his frizzly hair stand up, and his sharp blue eyes express amazement, at the proper moment; moreover, his pair of cheeks was such (after coming off the downs), and his laugh so dreadfully infectious, and he had such tales to tell—that several lofty butlers were persuaded to consider him.

Even the butler at Coombe Lorraine—but that will come better hereafter. Only as yet may be

fairly said, that Bonny looked up at the house on the hill with a delicate curiosity; and felt that his overtures might have been somewhat ungraceful, or at least ill-timed, when the new young footman (just taken on) took it entirely upon himself to kick him all the way down the hill. This little discourtesy, doubling of course Master Bonny's esteem and regard for the place, at the same time introduced some constraint into his after intercourse. For the moment, indeed, he took no measures to vindicate his honour; although, at a word (as he knew quite well), Bottler, the pigman, would have brought up his whip and seen to it. And even if any of the maids of the house had been told to tell Miss Alice about it, Bonny was sure of obtaining justice, and pity, and even half-a-crown.

Quick as he was to forget and forgive the many things done amiss to him, the boy, when he came to the mouth of the coombe, looked pretty sharply about him for traces of that dreadful fellow, who had proved himself such a footman. With Jack to help him, with jaw and heel, Bonny would not have been so very much afraid of even him; such a "strong-siding champion" had the donkey lately shown himself. Still, on the whole, and after such a long day's work by sea and shore, the rover was much relieved to find his little castle unenguarded.

The portal thereof was a yard in height, and perhaps fifteen inches wide; not all alike, but in and out, according to the way the things, or the boy himself, went rubbing it. A holy hermit once had lived there, if tradition spoke aright. But if so, he must have been as narrow of body to get in, as wide of mind to stop there. At any rate, Bonny was now the hermit, and less of a saint than a sinner.

The last glance of sunset was being reflected under the eaves of

twilight when these two came to their home and comfort in the bay of the quiet land. From the foot of the steep white cliff, the green-sward spread itself with a gentle slope, and breaks of roughness here and there, until it met the depth of cornland, where the feathering bloom appeared—for the summer was a hot one—reared upon its jointed stalk, and softened into a silver-grey by the level touch of evening. The little powdered stars of wheat-bloom could not now be seen, of course; neither the quivering of the awns, nor that hovering radiance, which in the hot day moves among them. Still the scent was on the air, the delicate fragrance of the wheat, only caught by waiting for it, when the hour is genial.

Bonny and Jack were not in the humour now to wait for anything. The scent of the wheat was nothing to them: but the smell of a loaf was something. And Jack knew, quite as well as Bonny, that let the time be as hard as it would—and it was a very hard time already, though nothing to what came afterward—nevertheless, there were two white loaves, charmed by their united powers, out of maids who were under notice to quit their situations. Also on the homeward road, they had not failed entirely of a few fine gristly hocks of pork, and the bottom of a skin of lard, and something unknown, but highly interesting, from a place where a pig had been killed that week, much as the time of year was wrong.

"Now, Jack, tend thee'zell," said Bonny, with the air of a full-grown man almost, while he was working his own little shoulders in betwixt the worn hair on the ribs, and the balanced bag overhanging them. Jack knew what he was meant to do; for he brought his white nose cleverly round, just where it was wanted, and pushed it under one end of the bag, and tossed it care-

fully over his back, so that it slid down beautifully.

When this great bag lay on the ground (or rather, stood up, in a clumsy way, by virtue of what was inside of it), the first thing everybody did was to come, and poke, and sniff at it. And though the everybody was no more than Jack and his donkey, the duty was not badly done, because they were both so hungry.

When the strings were cut, and the bag in relief of tension panted, ever so many things began to ooze, and to ease themselves, out of it. First of all two great dollops of oar-weed, which had excellently performed their task of keeping everything tight and sweet with the hungry fragrance of the sea. Then came a mixture of almost anything, which a boy of no daintiness was likely to regard as eatable, or a child of no science whatever to look upon as a rarity. Bonny was a collector of the grandest order; the one who collects everything. Here was food of the land, and food of the sea, and food of the tidal river, mingled with food for the mind of a boy, who had no mind—to his knowledge. In the humblest way he groped about, and wondered at almost everything.

Now he had things to wonder at which (in the heat of the day and the work) had been caught and stowed away anyhow. The boy and the donkey had earned their load with such true labour, that now they could not remember even half of it. Jack, by hard collar-work at the nets; Bonny, by cheering him up the sand, and tugging himself with his puny shoulders, and then by dancing, and treading away, and kicking with naked feet among the wastrel fish, full of thorns and tails, shed from the vent of the drag-net by the spent farewell of the shoaling wave.

For, on this very day, there had



been the great Midsummer haul at Shoreham. It was the old custom of the place; but even custom must follow the tides, and the top of the summer spring-tides (when the fish are always liveliest) happened, for the year 1811, to come on the 18th day of June. Bonny for weeks had been looking forward, and now before him lay his reward!

After many sweet and bitter uses of adversity, this boy, at an early age, had caught the tail of prudence. It had been to his heart, at first, a friendly and a native thing, to feast to the full (when he got the chance) and go empty away till it came again. But now, being grown to riper years, and, after much consideration, declared to be at least twelve years old by the only pork-butcher in Steyning, Bonny began to know what was what, and to salt a good deal of his offal.

For this wise process he now could find a greater call than usual; because, through the heat of the day, he had stuck to his first and firmly-grounded principle—never to refuse refuse. So that many other fine things were mingled, jumbled, and almost churned, among the sundry importations of the flowing tide and net. All of these, now, he well delivered (so far as sappy limbs could do it) upon a cleanish piece of ground, well accustomed to such favours. Then Bonny stood back, with his hands on his knees, and Jack spread his nose at some of it.

Loaves of genuine wheaten bread were getting scarce already. Three or four bad harvests, following long arrears of discontent, and hanging on the heavy arm of desperate taxation, kept the country, and the farmers, and the people that must be fed, in such a condition that we (who cannot be now content with anything) deserve no blame when we smack our lips in our dainty contempt of our grandfathers.

Bonny was always good to Jack,

according to the way they had of looking at one another; and so, of the choicest spoils, he gave him a half-peck loaf, of a fibre such as they seldom softened their teeth with. Jack preferred this to any clover, even when that luxury could be won by clever stealing; and now he trotted away with his loaf to the nearest stump where backing-power against his strong jaws could be got. Here he laid his loaf against the stump, and went a little way back to think about it, and to be sure that every atom was for him. Then, without scruple or time to spare, he tucked up his lips, and began in a hurry to make a bold dash for the heart of it.

"More haste, less speed," is a proverb that seems, at first sight, one of the last that need be quoted to a donkey. Yet, in the present instance, Jack should have spared himself time to study it; for in less than a moment he ran up to Bonny, with his wide mouth at its widest, snorting with pain, and much yearning to bellow, but by the position disabled. There was something stuck fast in the roof of his mouth, in a groove of the veiny black arches; and work as he might with his wounded tongue, he was only driving it further in. His great black eyes, as he gasped with fright, and the piteous whine of his quivering nose, and his way altogether so scared poor Bonny, that the chances were he would run away. And so, no doubt, he must have done (being but a little boy as yet), if it had not chanced that a flash of something caught his quick eye suddenly, something richly shining in the cavern of the donkey's mouth.

This was enough, of course, for Bonny. His instinct of scratching, and digging, and hiding, was up and at work in a moment. He thrust his brown hand betwixt Jack's great jaws, and drew it back quickly enough to escape the snap

of their glad reunion. And in his hand was something which he had drawn from the bag of the net that day, but scarcely stopped to look at twice, in the huddle of weeds and the sweeping. It had lain among many fine gifts of the sea—skates, and dog-fish, sea-devils, sting-rays, thornbacks, inky cuttles, and scollops, cockles, whelks, green crabs, jelly-fish, and everything else that makes fishermen swear, and then grin, and then spit on their palms again. Among these in Bonny's bag had lain manifold boons of the life-giving earth, extracted from her motherly feeling by one or two good butchers.

Bonny made no bones of this. Fish, flesh, fowl, or stale red-herring—he welcomed all the works of

charity with a charitable nose, and fingers not of the nicest. So that his judgment could scarcely have been "prejudicially affected by any preconceived opinion"—as our purest writers love to say—when he dropped this thing, and smelled his thumb, and cried, "Lord, how it makes my hands itch!"

After such a strong expression, what can we have to say to him? It is the privilege of our period to put under our feet whatever we would rather not face out. At the same time, to pretend to love it, and lift it by education. Nevertheless, one may try to doubt whether poor Bonny's grandchildren (if he ever presumed to have any) thrive on the lesson, as well as he did on the loaf, of charity.

#### CHAPTER XI.

There used to be a row of buildings, well within the sacred precincts of the Inner Temple, but still preserving a fair look-out on the wharves, and the tidal gut at their back, till the whole view was swallowed by gas-works. Here for long ages, law had flourished on the excrete things of outlawry, fed by the reek of Whitefriars, as a good nettle enjoys the mixen.

Already, however, some sweeping changes had much improved this neighbourhood; and the low attorneys who thrived on crime, and of whom we get unpleasant glimpses through our classic novelists, had been succeeded by men of repute, and learning, and large practice. And among all these there was not one more widely known and respected than Glanvil Malahide, K.C.; an eminent equity-barrister, who now declined to don the wig in any ordinary cause. He had been obliged, of course, to fight, like the rest of mankind, for celebrity; but as soon as this was well

assured, he quitted the noisier sides of it. But his love of the subtleties of the law (spun into fairer and frailer gossamer by the soft spider of equity), as well as the power of habit, kept him to his old profession; so that he took to chamber-practice, and had more than he could manage.

Sir Roland Lorraine had known this gentleman by repute at Oxford, when Glanvil Malahide was young, and believed to be one of the best scholars there; in the days when scholarship often ripened (as it seldom does now) to learning. For the scholarship now must be kept quite young, for the smaller needs of tuition.

Hence it came to pass that as soon as Hilary Lorraine was quite acquit of Oxford leading-strings, and had scrambled into some degree, his father, who especially wished (for some reasons of his own) to keep the boy out of the army, entered him gladly among the pupils of Mr Glanvil Malahide. Not that



Hilary was expected ever to wear the horse-hair much (unless an insane desire to do so should find its way into his open soul), but that the excellent goodness of law might drop, like the gentle dew from heaven, and grow him into a Justice of the Peace.

Hilary looked upon this matter, as he did on too many others, with a sweet indifference. If he could only have had his own way, he would have been a soldier long ago; for that was the time when all the spirit of Britain was roused up to arms. But this young fellow's great fault was, to be compact of so many elements that nothing was settled amongst them. He had "great gifts," as Mr Malahide said—"extraordinary talents," we say now—but nobody knew (least of all their owner) how to work them properly. This is one of the most unlucky compositions of human mind—to be applicable to everything, but applied to nothing. If Hilary had lain under pressure, and been squeezed into one direction, he must have become a man of mark.

This his father could not see. As a general rule a father fails to know what his son is fit for; and after disappointment, fancies (for a little time at least) himself a fool to have taken the boy to be all that the mother said of him. Nevertheless, the poor mother knows how right she was, and the world how wrong.

But Hilary Lorraine, from childhood, had no mother to help him. What he had to help him was good birth, good looks, good abilities, a very sweet temper, and a kind and truly genial nature. Also a strong-will of his own (whenever his heart was moving), yet ashamed to stand forth boldly in the lesser matters. And here was his fatal error; that he looked upon almost everything as one of the lesser matters. He had, of course, a host of friends, from the freedom of his manner;

and sometimes he would do such things that the best, or even the worst of them, could no longer walk with him. Things not vicious, but a great deal too far gone in the opposite way—such as the snatching up of a truly naked child and caressing it, or any other shameful act, in the face of the noblest Christendom. These things he would do, and worse; such as no toady with self-respect could smile at in broad daylight, and such as often exposed the lad to laughter in good society. One of his best friends used to say that Hilary wanted a vice or two to make his virtues balance. This may have been so; but none the less, he had his share of failings.

For a sample of these last he had taken up and made much of one of his fellow-pupils in these well-connected chambers. This was one Gregory Lovejoy, a youth entirely out of his element among fashionable sparks. Steadfast ambition of a conceptive mother sent him, against his stars, to London; and here he became the whetstone for those brilliant blades, his fellow-pupils. Because he had been at no university, nor even so much as a public school, and had no introduction to anybody who had never heard of him.

Now the more the rest disdained this fellow, the more Lorraine regarded him; feeling, with a sense too delicate to arise from any thought, that shame was done to good birth by being even conscious of it, except upon great occasions. And so, without giving much offence, or pretending to be a champion, Hilary used to shield young Lovejoy from the blunt shafts of small humour continually levelled at him.

Mr Malahide's set of chambers was perhaps the best to be found in Equity Walk, Inner Temple. His pupils—ten in number always, because he would accept no more, and his high repute insured no less—these worthy youths had the longest

room, facing with three whitey-brown windows into "Numa Square." Hence the view, containing all "utilitarian edifices," freely ranged across the garden's classic walks of asphodel to the broad Lethean river on whose wharves we are such weeds. For "Paper Buildings," named from some swift sequence of suggestion, reared no lofty height as yet to mar the sedentary view.

All who have the local key will enter into the scene at once; so far, at least, as necessary change has failed to operate. But Mr Malahide's pupils scarcely ever looked out of the windows. None, however, should rashly blame them for apathy as to the prospect. They seldom looked out of the windows, because they were very seldom inside them.

In the first place, their attendance there was voluntary and precarious. They paid their money, and they took their choice whether they ever did anything more. Each of them paid—or his father for him—a fee of a hundred guineas to have the "run of the chambers," and most of them carried out their purpose by a run-away from them. The less they came, the less trouble they caused to Mr Glanvil Malahide; who always gave them that much to know when they paid their fee of entrance. "If you mean to be a lawyer," he said, "I will do my best to make you one. If you only come for the name of it, I shall say but little more to you." This, of course, was fair enough, and the utmost that could be expected of him: for most of his pupils were young men of birth, or good position in the English counties, to whom in their future condition of life a little smattering of law, or the credit of owning such smattering, would be worth a few hundred guineas. Common Law, of course, was far more likely to avail them in their rubs of the world than equity; but of that fine drug they had generally taken their

dose in Pleaders' Chambers, and were come to wash the taste away in the purer shallows of equity.

Hilary, therefore, might be considered, and certainly did consider himself, a remarkably attentive pupil, for he generally was to be found in chambers four or even five days of the week, coming in time to read all the news before the five o'clock dinner in Hall. Whereas the Honourable Robert Gumption, and Sir Francis Kickabout, two of his fellow-pupils, had only been seen in chambers once since they paid their respective fees; and the reason of their attendance then was that they found the towels too dirty to use at the billiard-rooms in Fleet Street. The clerks used to say among themselves, that "these young fellows must be dreadful fools to pay one hundred guineas, because any swell with the proper cheek might easy enough have the go of the chambers, and nobody none the wiser; for they wouldn't know him, nor the other young gents, and least of all old "horsewieg."

However, there chanced to be two or three men who made something more than a very expensive lounge of these eminent chambers. Of these worthy fellows, Rice Cockles was one (who had been senior wrangler two years before, and from that time knew not one good night's rest, till the Woolsack broke his fall into his grave), and another was Gregory Lovejoy. Cockles was thoroughly conscious—as behoves a senior wrangler—of possessing great abilities; and Lovejoy knew, on his own behalf, that his mother at least was as sure as could be of all the wonders he must do.

Hilary could not bear Rice Cockles, who was of a dry sarcastic vein; but he liked young Lovejoy more and more, the more he had to defend him. Youths who have not had the fortune to be at a public school or a college, seldom know how



to hold their tongues until the world has silenced them. Gregory, therefore, thought no harm to boast opportunely one fine May morning (when some one had seen a tree blossoming somewhere) of the beauty of his father's cherry-trees. How noble and grand they must be just now, one sheet of white, white, white, he said, as big as the Inner and the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn, all put together! And then how the bees were among them buzzing, knowing which sorts first to milk; and the tortoise-shell butterflies quite sure to be out, for the first of their summering. But in the moonlight, best of all, when the moon was three days short of full, then was the time an unhappy Londoner must be amazed with happiness. Then to walk among them was like walking in a fairy-land, or being lost in a sky of snow, before a flake begins to fall. A delicate soft world of white, an in and out of fancy lace, a feeling of some white witchery, and almost a fright that little white blossoms have such power over one.

"Where may one find this grand paradise?" asked Rice Cockles, as if he could scarcely refrain his feet from the road to it.

"Five miles the other side of Seven-Oaks;" Gregory answered, boldly.

"I know the country. Does your father grow cherries for Covent Garden market?"

"Of course he does. Didn't you know that?" Thenceforth in chambers Lovejoy was always known as "Cherry Lovejoy." And he always answered to that name.

It was now the end of June, and the cherries must be getting ripe. The day had been very hot and sultry, and Hilary came into chambers later than his usual time, but fresh as a lark, as he always was. Even Mr Malahide had felt the weight of the weather, and of his

own threescore years and five, and in his own room was dozing. The three clerks in their little den were fit for next to nothing, except to lie far away in some meadow, with sleepy beer, under alder-trees. Even Rice Cockles had struck work with one of those hopeless headaches which are bred by hot weather from satire, a thing that turns sour above freezing-point; and no one was dwelling in the long hot room save the peaceful and steady Gregory.

Even he, with his resolute will to fulfil his mother's prophecies, could scarcely keep his mind from flagging, or his mouth from yawning, as he went through some most elaborate answer to a grand petition in equity—the iniquity being, to a common mind, that the question could have arisen. But Mr Malahide, of course, regarded things professionally.

"Lovejoy, thy name is 'Love misery,'" cried young Lorraine, who never called his fellow-pupil "Cherry," though perfectly welcome to do so. "I passed an optician's shop just now, and the thermometer stands at 96°. That quill must have come from an ostrich to be able to move in such weather. Even the counsellor yields to the elements. Hark how he winds his sultry horn! Is it not a great and true writer who says, 'I tell thee that the quills of the law are the deadliest shafts of the Evil One'? Come, therefore, and try a darting match."

Gregory felt no inclination for so hot a pastime; he had found, however, a habit of yielding to the impulsive and popular Hilary, which led him into a few small scrapes, and one or two that were not small. Lorraine's unusual brightness of nature, and personal beauty, and gentle bearing, as well as an inborn readiness to be pleased with everybody, insured him a good liking with almost all kinds of people. How then could young Lovejoy, of a fine

but unshapen character, and never introduced to the very skirts of good society, help looking up to his champion Hilary as a charming deity? Therefore he made way at once for Hilary's sudden freak for darts. The whole world being at war just then (as happens upon the average in every generation), Cherry Lovejoy slung his target, a legal almanac for the year. Then he took four long quills, and pared them of their plumes, and split the shafts, and fitted each with four paper wings, cut and balanced cleverly. His aptness in the business showed that this was not his first attempt; and it was a hard and cruel thing that he should now have to prepare them. But the clerks had a regular trick of stealing the "young pups'" darts from their unlocked drawers, partly for practice among themselves, but mainly to please their families.

"Capital! Beautifully done!" cried Hilary, as full of life as if the only warmth of the neighbourhood were inside him. "We never turned out such a good lot before; I could never do that like you. But now for the tips, my dear fellow!"

"Any fool can do what I have done. But no one can cut the tip at all, to stick in the target, and not bounce back; only you, Mr Lorraine."

"Mister Lorraine! now Gregory Lovejoy, I thought we liked one another well enough to have dropped that long ago. If you will only vouchsafe to notice, you shall see how I cut the slit, so that the well-spiced javelin pierces even a cover of calf-skin." It was done in a moment, by some quick art, inherited, perhaps, from Prince Agasicles, and then they took their stations.

From the further end of the room they cast (for thirty feet and more perhaps) over two great tables scarred by keen generations of lawyers.

Hilary threw the stronger shaft, but Gregory took more careful aim; so that in spite of the stifling heat the contest grew exciting.

"Blest if they young donkeys knows hot from cold!" said the senior clerk, disturbed in his little room by the prodding and walking, and the lively voices.

"Sooner them, than you nor me!" the second clerk muttered sleepily. When the most ungrammatical English is wanted, a copying clerk is the man to supply it.

In spite of unkindly criticism, the brisk acrotic strife went on. And every hit was chronicled on a long sheet of draft paper.

"Sixteen to you, eighteen to me!" cried Gregory, poising his long shadowed spear, while his coat and waistcoat lay in the folds of a suit that could never terminate, and his square Kentish face was even redder than a ripe May-Duke. At that moment the door was opened, and in came Mr Malahide.

"Just so!" he said, in his quiet way; "I now understand the origin of a noise which has often puzzled me. Lorraine, what a baby you must be!"

"Can a baby do that?" said Hilary, as he stepped into poor Gregory's place, and sped his dart into the Chancellor's eye, the bull's eye of their target.

"That was well done," Mr Malahide answered; "perhaps it is the only good shot you will ever make in your profession."

"I hope not, sir. Under your careful tuition I am laying the foundations of a mighty host of learning."

At this the lawyer was truly pleased. He really did believe that he took some trouble with his pupils; and his very kind heart was always gratified by their praises. And he showed his pleasure in his usual way by harping on verbal niceties.

"Foundations of a host, Lorraine!



Foundations of a pile, you mean; and as yet, *lusisti pilis*. But you may be a credit to me yet. Allowance must be made for this great heat. I will talk to you to-morrow."

With these few words, and a pleasant smile, the eminent lawyer withdrew to his den, feigning to have caught no glimpse of the deeply-blushing Lovejoy. For he knew quite well that Gregory could not afford to play with his schooling; and so (like a proper gentleman) he fell upon the one who could. Hilary saw his motive, and with his usual speed admired him.

"What a fine fellow he is!" he said, as if in pure self-commune: "from the time he becomes Lord Chancellor, I will dart at no legal almanac. But the present fellow—however, the weather is too hot to talk of him. Lovejoy, wilt thou come with me? I must break out into the country."

"What!" cried Gregory, drawing up at the magic word from his stool of repentance, and the desk of his diminished head. "What was that you said, Lorraine?"

"Fair indeed is the thing thou hast said, and fair is the way thou saidest it. Tush! shall I never get wholly out of my ignorant knowledge of Greek plays? Of languages that be, or have been, only two words survive this weather, in the streets of London town; one is 'rus,' and the other 'country.'"

"It is a sweet and decorous thing to die on behalf of the country. That line I remember well; you must have seen it somewhere?"

"It is one of my earliest memories, and not a purely happy one. But that is 'patria,' not 'rus.' 'Patria' is the fatherland; 'rus' is a fellow's mother. None can understand this parable till they have lived in London."

"Lorraine," said Gregory, coming up shyly, yet with his brown eyes sparkling, and a steadfast mouth to

declare himself—"you are very much above me, of course, I know."

"I am uncommonly proud to hear it," Hilary answered, with his most sweet smile; "because I must be a much finer fellow than I ever could have dreamed of being."

"Now, you know well enough what I mean. I mean, in position of life, and all that, and birth, and breeding, and everything else."

"To be sure," said Hilary, gravely, making a trumpet of blotting-paper; "any other advantage, Gregory?"

"Fifty, if I could stop to tell them. But I see that you mean to argue it. Now argument is a thing that always——"

"Now, Gregory, just acknowledge me your superior in argument; and I will confess myself your superior in every one of those other things."

"Well, you know, Lorraine, I could scarcely do that. Because it was only the very last time——"

"Exactly," said Hilary; "so it was—the very last time, you left me no more than a shadow caught in a cleft stick. Therefore, friend Gregory, say your say, without any traps for the sole of my foot."

"Well, what I was thinking was no more than this—if you would take it into consideration now—considering what the weather is, and all the great people gone out of London, and the streets like fire almost, and the lawyers frightened by the comet, quite as if, as if, almost——"

"As if it were the devil come for them."

"Exactly so. Bellows' clerk told me, after he saw the comet, that he could prove he had never been articulated. And when you come to consider also that there will be a row to-morrow morning,—not much, of course, but still a thing to be avoided till the weather cools,—I thought; at least, I began to think——"

"My dear fellow, what? Anx-

iety in this dreadful weather is fever."

"Nothing, nothing at all, Lorraine. But you are the sweetest-tempered fellow I ever came across; and so I thought that you would not mind,—at least, not so very much, perhaps——"

"My sweet temper is worn out. I have no mind to mind anything, Gregory; come and dine with me."

"That is how you stop me always, Lorraine; I cannot be for ever coming, and come, to dine with you. I always like it; but you know——"

"To be sure, I know that I like it too. It is high time to see about it. Who could dine in Hall to-day, and drink his bottle of red-hot port?"

"I could, and so could a hundred others. And I mean to do it, unless——"

"Unless what? Mysterious Gregory, by your face I know that you have some very fine thing to propose. Have you the heart to keep me suspended, as well as uncommonly hungry?"

"It is nothing to make a fuss about. Lorraine, you turn upon one so, as if you forget the difference. I was only thinking just by accident, of something that came into my head quite casually."

"Such things have an inspiration. Out with it at last, fair Gregory."

"Well then, if you must have it, how I should like for you to come with me to have a little turn among my father's cherry-trees!"

"What a noble thought!" said Hilary; "a poetic imagination only could have hit on such a thought. The thermometer at 96°—and the cherries—can they be sour now?"

"Such a thing is quite impossible," Gregory answered, gravely; "in a very cold wet summer they are sometimes a little middling. But in such a splendid year as this, there can be no two opinions. Would you like to see them?"

"Now, Lovejoy, I can put up with much; but not with maddening questions."

"You mean, I suppose, that you could enjoy half-a-dozen cool red cherries, if you had the chance to pick them in among the long green leaves?"

"Half-a-dozen! Half-a-peek; and half-a-bushel afterwards. Where have I put my hat? I am off, if it costs my surviving sixpence."

"Lorraine, how very good you are! But you are always in such a hurry. You ought to think a good many times, before you are sure that you ought to do it. Remember that my father's house is very good indeed, and very comfortable, I am sure; still it is very different from what you are accustomed to."

"Such things are not worth thinking about. Custom, and all that, are quite below contempt; I know they are. The greatest mistake of our lives is custom; and the greatest delight is to kick it away. Will your father be glad to see me?"

"He has heard so much of you, Lorraine, that he vowed he would come to London (though he hates it so abominably), to see you and to ask you down; if I were afraid to do so. It is a very old-fashioned place; you must please to bear that in mind. Also, my father, and my mother, and all of us, are old-fashioned people, living in a quiet way. You would carry on more in an hour, than we do in a twelvemonth. We like to go all over things, ever so many times, perhaps (like pushing rings up and down a stick), before we begin to settle them. But, when we have settled them, we never start again; as you seem to do."

"Now, Gregory, Gregory, this is bad. When did you know me to start again? Ready I am to start this once, and to dwell in the orchards for ever."



In a few words more, these two young fellows agreed to take their luck of it. There was nothing in chambers for Lovejoy to lose, by going away for a day or two; and Hilary long had felt uneasy at leaving a holiday overdue. Therefore they made their minds up promptly for an early start next morning, while the drowsy town should be thrusting chimney-pots to catch the dew.

"Gregory," said Lorraine, at last, "your mind is a nest of genius. We two will sit upon bushel-baskets, and watch the sun rise out of sacks. Before he sets, we will challenge him to face our early waggon. Covent Garden is our trysting spot, and the hour 4 A.M. Oh, day to be marked with white chalk for ever!"

"I am sure I can't tell how that may be," answered the less fervent Gregory. "There is not much chalk down our way, and I never saw black chalk anywhere. But can I trust you to be there? If you don't come, I shall not go without you, and the whole affair must be put off."

"No fear, Gregory; no fear of me. The lark shall still be on her nest;—but wait, my friend, I will tell the Counsellor, lest I seem to dread his face."

Lovejoy saw that this was the bounden duty of a gentleman, inasmuch as the learned lawyer had promised his young friend a little remonstrance upon the following morning. The chances were that he would forget it; and this, of course, enhanced the duty of making him remember it. Therefore Hilary gave three taps on the worm-eaten door of his good tutor, according to the scale of precedence. This rule was—inferior clerk, one tap; head-clerk, two taps; pupil (being no clerk at all, and paying, not drawing, salary), as many taps as he might think proper, in a reasonable way.

Hilary, of course, began, as he always managed to begin, with almost everybody.

"I am sorry to disturb you, sir, and I have nothing particular to say."

"In that case, why did you come, Lorraine? It is your usual state of mind."

"Well, sir," said Hilary, laughing at the terse mood of the master, "I thought you had something to say to me—a very unusual state of mind," he was going to say, "on your part;" but stopped, with a well-bred youth's perception of the unbecoming.

"Yes, I have something to say to you. I remember it now, quite clearly. You were playing some childish game with Lovejoy, in the pupil's room. Now, this is all well enough for you, who are fit for nothing else, perhaps. Your father expects no work from you; and if he did, he would never get it. You may do very well, in your careless way, being born to the gift of indifference. But those who can and must work hard—is it honest of you to seduce them? You think that I speak severely. Perhaps I do, because I feel that I am speaking to a gentleman."

"It is uncommonly hard," said Hilary, with his bright blue eyes half conscious of a shameful spring of moisture, "that a fellow always gets it worse for trying to be a gentleman."

"You have touched a great truth," Mr Malahide answered, labouring bitterly not to smile; "but so it always must be. My boy, I am sorry to vex you; but to be vexed is better than to grieve. You like young Lovejoy—don't make him idle."

"Sir, I will dart at him henceforth, instead of the late Lord Chancellor, now sitting upon asphodel."

"Lorraine," the great lawyer sud-

denly asked, in a flush of unusual interest; "you have been at Oxford quite recently. They do all sorts of things there now. Have they settled what asphodel is?"

"No, sir, I fear that they never will. There are several other moot questions still. But with your kind leave, I mean to try to settle that point to-morrow."

## CHAPTER XII.

Martin Lovejoy, Gregory's father, owned and worked a pleasant farm in that part of Kent which the natives love to call the "Garden of Eden." In the valley of the upper Medway, a few miles above Maidstone, pretty hamlets follow the soft winding of the river. Here an ancient race of settlers, quiet but intelligent, chose their home, and chose it well, and love it as dearly as ever.

To argue with such people is to fall below their mercy. They stand at their cottage-doors, exactly as twelve generations ago they stood. A riotous storm or two may have swept them, but it never lasted long. The bowers of hop and of honey-suckle, trimmed alleys, and rambling roses, the flowering trees by the side of the road, and the truest of true green meadows, the wealth of deep orchards retiring away—as all wealth does—to delight itself; and where the land condescends to wheat, the vast gratitude of the wheat-crop,—nobody wonders, after a while, that these men know their value.

The early sun was up and slurring light upon London housetops, as a task of duty only, having lost all interest in a thing even he can make no hand of. But the brisk air of the morning, after such a night of sweltering, and of strong smells under slates, rode in the perpetual balance of the clime, and spread itself. Fresh, cool draughts of new-born day, as vague as the smile of an infant, roved about; yet were to be caught according to the dew-lines. And of these the best and truest followed into Covent Garden, under the force of attraction

towards the green stuff they had begotten.

Here was a wondrous reek of men before the night had quite spent itself. Such a Babel, of a market-morning in the "berry-season," as makes one long to understand the mother-tongue of nobody. Many things are nice and handsome; fruit and flowers are fair and fresh; life is as swift as life can be; and the pulse of price throbs everywhere. Yet, upon the whole, it is wiser not to say much more of it.

Martin Lovejoy scarcely ever ventured into this stormy world. In summer and autumn he was obliged to send some of his fruit to London; but he always sent it under the care of a trusty old retainer, Master John Shorne, whose crusty temper and crisp wit were a puzzle to the Cockney costermonger. Throughout the market, this man was known familiarly as "Kentish Crust," and the name helped him well in his business.

Now, in the summer morning early, Hilary Lorraine, with his most sprightly walk and manner, sought his way through the crowded alleys and the swarms of those that buy and sell. Even the roughest of rough customers (when both demand and supply are rough), though they would not yield him way, at any rate did not shove him by. "A swell, to buy fruit for his sweetheart," was their conclusion in half a glance at him. "Here, sir, here you are! berries for nothing, and cherries we pays you for eating of them!"

With the help of these generous



fellows, Hilary found his way to John Shorne and the waggon. The horses, in unbuckled ease, were munching their well-earned corn close by; for at that time Covent Garden was not squeezed and driven as now it is. The tail-board of the waggon was now hanging upon its hinges, and "Kentish Crust," on his springy rostrum, dealt with the fag-end of his goods. The market, in those days, was not flooded with poor foreign produce, fair to the eye, but a fraud on the belly, and continually ending in dropsy. Englishmen, at that time, did not spend the whole power of their minds upon the newest and speediest measures for robbing their brother Englishmen; and a native would really buy from his neighbour as gladly as from his born enemy.

Master John Shorne had a canvas bag on the right side of his breeches, hanging outside, full in sight, defying every cut-purse. That age was comparatively honest; nevertheless, John kept a club, cut in Mereworth wood, quite handy. And, at every sale he made, he rang his coin of the realm in his bag, as if he were calling bees all round the waggon. This generally led to another sale. For money has a richly irresistible joy in jingling.

Hilary was delighted to watch these things, so entirely new to him. He had that fatal gift of sliding into other people's minds, and wondering what to do there. Not as a great poet has it (still reserving his own strength, and playing on the smaller nature kindly as he loves it), but simply as a child rejoices to play with other children. So that he entered eagerly into the sudden changes of John's temper, according to the tone, the bidding, and, most of all, the importance of the customers that came to him. By this time the cherries were all sold out, having left no trace except some red splashes, where an over-ripe sieve

had been bleeding. But the Kentish man still had some bushels of peas, and new potatoes, and bunches of coleworts, and early carrots, besides five or six dozens of creamy cauliflowers, and several scores of fine-hearted lettuce. Therefore he was dancing with great excitement up and down his van, for he could not bear to go home uncleared; and some of his shrewder customers saw that by waiting a little longer they would be likely to get things at half-price. Of course, he was fully alive to this, and had done his best to hide surplus stock, by means of sacks, and mats, and empty bushels piled upon full ones.

"Crusty, thou must come down, old fellow," cried a one-eyed costermonger, winking first at John, and then through the rails, and even at the springs of the van; "half the load will go back to Kent, or else to the cowkeeper, if so be you holds on so almighty dear."

"Ha, then, Joe, are you waiting for that? Go to the cow-yard and take your turn. They always feeds the one-eyed first. Gentlemen, now—while there's anything left! We've kept all the very best back to the last, 'cos they chanced to be packed by an Irishman. 'First goes in, must first come out.' Paddy, are you there to stick to it?"

"Be jabers, and how could I slip out, when the hape of you was atop of me? And right I was, be the holy poker; there it all is the very first in the bottom of the vhan!"

"Now, are you nearly ready, John?" asked Gregory, suddenly appearing through the laughter of the crowd; "here is the gentleman going with us, and I can't have him kept waiting."

"Come up, Master Greg, and help sell out, if you know the time better than I do." John Shorne was vexed, or he would not so have spoken to his master's son.

To his great surprise, with a

bound up came not Gregory Lovejoy, who was always a little bit shy of the marketing, but Hilary Lorraine, declared by dress and manner (clearly marked, as now they never can be) of an order wholly different from the people round him.

"Let me help you, sir," he said; "I have long been looking on; I am sure that I understand it."

"Forty years have I been at un, and I scarcely knows un now. They takes a deal of mannerin', sir, and the prices will go in and out."

"No doubt; and yet for the sport of it, let me help you, Master Shorne. I will not sell a leaf below the price you whisper to me."

In such height of life and hurry, half a minute is enough to fetch a great crowd anywhere. It was round the market in ten seconds that a grand lord was going to sell out of Grower Lovejoy's waggon. For a great wager, of course it must be; and all who could rush, rushed to see. Hilary let them get ready, and waited till he saw that their money was burning. Meanwhile Crusty John was grinning one of his most experienced grins.

"Don't let him, oh don't let him," Gregory shouted to the salesman, as Hilary came to the rostrum with a bunch of carrots in one hand and a cauliflower in the other—"What would his friends say if they heard it?"

"Nay, I'll not let un," John Shorne answered, mischievously taking the verb in its (now) provincial sense; "why should I let un? It can't hurt he, and it may do good to we."

In less than ten minutes the van was cleared, and at such prices as Grower Lovejoy's goods had not fetched all through the summer. Such competition arose for the honour of purchasing from a "nobleman," and so enchanted were the dealers' ladies, many of whom came

thronging round, with Hilary's bright complexion, gay address, and complaisancy.

"Well done, my lord! well done indeed!" Crusty John, to keep up the fiction, shouted when he had pouched the money—"Gentlemen and ladies, my lord will sell again next week; he has a heavy bet about it with the Prince Reg—tush, what a fool I am! they will send me to prison if I tell!"

As a general rule, the more suspicious people are in some ways, the more credulous are they in all the rest. Kentish Crust was aware of this, and expected and found for the next two months extraordinary inquiry for his goods.

"Friend Gregory, wherefore art thou glum?" said Hilary to young Lovejoy, while the horses with their bunched-up tails were being buckled to again. Lorraine was radiant with joy, both at his recent triumph in a matter quite unknown to him, and even more because of many little pictures spread before him by his brisk imagination far away from London. Every stamp of a horse's hoof was as good as a beat of the heart to him.

"Lorraine," the sensible Gregory answered, after some hesitation, "I am vexed at the foolish thing you have done. Not that it really is at all a disgrace to you, or your family, but that the world would take it so; and we must think as the world does."

"Must we?" asked Hilary, smiling kindly; "well, if we must, let us think it on springs."

At the word he leaped into the fruit-van so lightly that the strong springs scarcely shook; and Gregory could do no better than climb in calmly after him. "Gee-wugg," cried Master Shorne again; the bright brass harness flashed in the sun, and the horses merrily rang their hoofs on the road to their native land of Kent.



## DISORDER IN DREAMLAND.

## CONCLUSION.

At length came Hardinge's last week. It was now the middle of May. His successor was to arrive and relieve him of his charge in three or four days; and the Wetton Club conceived a great idea. It would give a picnic to which the old and the new recruiting officer should both be invited. The picnic should be an exceptionally sumptuous one even among Wetton picnics. The members' subscription to these festivities was a fixed thing which could not conveniently be exceeded, and therefore when extra splendour was designed it was notified that the committee would receive donations from members disposed to give of their substance for the honour of the institution. On this occasion Mr Saunders came down so handsomely both in money and in wine presented from his cellar, that the disposition to call him names was greatly lessened, and some of the more impressionable members ventured in their impulsive way to say that the fellow was not such a bad fellow after all. Ben, you observe, was applying the means which fortune had given him to the attainment of the end which he was now keeping steadily in view. It is a wonderful power, the power of giving. He is a mighty donkey who, having a little spare cash in his coffers, cannot manage to buy opinion. How many of us are there that are proof against gifts discreetly offered? Some, we know, spread their palms unblushingly for a half-crown or a sovereign; others who would scorn to do that may be obliged in more delicate ways. Whether you desire to win a general, or a particular, good

opinion, your money cleverly spent will help you, I am afraid, more than all your virtue and all your philanthropy, if these last take any other form than the utterance of the current coin of the realm. You may ignore or resist, or be offended at, a man's moral claims to respect or goodwill, but it requires an Apemantus or an Apostle to say, "Thy money perish with thee." It is another question whether opinion is worth buying, as a rule: the wisest men probably would tell us that it is not, especially if the buyer invest in it so largely and with so mistaken a conception of its nature as to make himself a beggar and a misanthrope like old Timon. Howbeit, "let sage or cynic prattle as he will," I have known, and so I doubt not has my reader, clowns and louts keeping their footing in society, old muffs without a military idea commanding regiments with success, the most selfish and vicious of men lauded as patriots and great ensamples, because they had money to spend, and spent it freely and judiciously. Some men too I have known attempting to buy opinion without the means to pay for it, and these have generally come to grief just as do those who indulge in any other extravagance. Our friend Saunders, however (I venture to call him our friend in the hope that some little pity may have been aroused for him, upstart as he was; for the lines had fallen to Ben in rather slippery places—his bringing-up had not been calculated to correct the faults of his disposition, and that unlucky dream was a snare to him)—our friend Saunders was not rushing into extravagance;

he could lay his hand upon a little ready money, and he chose to spend it in buying up, as it were, an edition of his character that was in circulation, and endeavouring to publish a revised one with considerable alterations. And the success of his efforts was remarkable. Already, at the time of this picnic, men, although they would wink at each other by way of protesting against the supposition of their opinion of him being altered, had left off speaking of "that intolerable young cub," or "the swell builder," and instead thereof made jests about *Saunders's entire*, or *the shades below*, which last periphrasis intimated that Ben's house was a hell,—which was all nonsense, for the play there, though tolerably frequent, was mild enough. Indeed, Ben was getting on very well towards the attainment of his object. He didn't hear, or didn't understand, or didn't care about, the nicknames which were given to himself or his house: those who invented them did so to vent their contempt of themselves for going after his entertainments, under cover of satirising him who gave them: and he did get a good many young men who thought themselves chiefs in Wetton to consent to companionship with him. They amused themselves with his vulgarity and his solecisms, but they ate his dinners and drank his wine for all that. His mother, not having any ambition for herself, was never visible except to some old cronies of her own who would drink tea with her in the kitchen about six o'clock in the afternoon; but she looked carefully to the preparation of Benjamin's dinners, if indeed superintendence was all she contributed to the cooking. I have some idea that she had been cook in a gentleman's family, and did not now object to brightening up once more the science that had grown dull

within her. But this has become rather an unwarrantable digression: let us go back to the picnic. There was scarcely a vehicle private or public in Wetton or within three miles of it that was not in requisition on the morning of that acted idyl. Everybody who, according to the rigid code of Wetton ceremonial, was admissible to the festival, had been invited and took care to be there. And Devonshire, as if in pitying scorn of the Wettons and Slushtons and similar nomenclature, chose to show what sort of a spring day she could turn out when so minded (which it must be confessed that she seldom was). The drizzle and sleet and mist were as foreign to that day as if such atmospheric treats were unknown in the neighbourhood. The sky was charmingly blue, and the few great lazy clouds that floated over it had not a sign of vice in them, but served just to prevent glare, and to nourish the hopes of such gentlemen as were taking their fishing rods with them. The breeze, a veritable zephyr, floated about in the most easy, well-bred manner, making things very pleasant, without obtruding himself in the least; cooling a soft cheek without stirring a ringlet; breathing on the young foliage so gently, that its motion could be perceived only by watching the sportive shadows. The chestnut blossoms were not quite past, although their bloom was waning; but the thorns, pink, red, white, were the glory of the fields and hedges that day. And the hedges—Devonshire hedges, you remember, some of them as tall and as thick as the ramparts of a town—were all smiling with leaves and flowers, drowsy with the hum of winged things, and dispersing the "good smell" which is associated with the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle. Delicious as they are,



such days are apt slightly to sadden a man who is rash enough to trust himself alone and unsupported to their influence; but with lively company, with a large party bent on making holiday, they are simply enchanting. Indeed everybody seemed to have faith in his or her power of keeping enjoyment alive, for the expedition started tolerably early in the day, and no soul thought of being at home again till dark, or perhaps a trifle after, for some of the more romantic were heard asking if there wouldn't be a moon.

The reader doesn't, of course, suppose that the Club and the guests stole quietly into the country, and there by degrees grew to be a cavalcade large enough to attract notice. Certainly not; all Wetton and its environs were astir, determined to see the start if they could have nothing else to do with the select entertainment; for, after the races, and the calling out of the militia, a picnic given by the Club was perhaps the most exciting event.

"Lar, neow!" said one girl to her fellow, both being appurtenances of the establishment of Mrs Tucker the dressmaker and milliner—"Lar, neow! if there isn't Miss Lyddy in her new shot-silk; a lovely thing it be, but her's ventur-some to go so fur from home in en the fust time. I wouldn't ef 'twas mines, I know!"

"Lar! what odds? 'Tisn't agwain to rain, and her isn't a fewl to go squattin' in the green grass with en on, trest she for that. Do 'ee see how sweet like the young passon look'th upon her? Her 'th amade the most of herself, tew, han't her? I don't know the gentleman and lady what's long with 'em; whew be they?"

"I think they'm Mr and Mrs Yeo, what's uncle and aunt to Miss Lyddy. A little ways in the coun-

try they lives. I can't abide that there Miss Lyddy."

"What fur?"

"Her's false. There, now; there be the tew Miss (I never can call their name). They be daughters of the great waryer that everybody's afeard uv. They dresses wasn't made to Wetton, I'll wage. Ben't 'em smart? and the bunnets and all, oh my, it's handsome!"

"Betsey, Betsey, look here, chiel! here's six young men, I vow, all in one carriage. That's lawyer Phillips a-driving; and there's young Mr Simmons, and Mr Phil Tarraway, and Mr—oh, Betsey, don't look upon en, he's the imperentest"—(then, as the vehicle passed by)—"like your persumshum, I'm sure; what next, I wonder! Oh, Betsey, turn away!"

"What's making of 'ee laugh, Fanny, and hide away your face? Imperent is he? I daresay. Think I didn't see en nod his head to 'ee? Look'th as ef yew was fond of imperent fellers."

"Betsey, be quiet. I didn't laugh, please sure; but turn away my head I did, for that's a bould man; he'd make any maiden colour up. There's Miss Bell and Miss Susey Woolcock a-gettin' into the pony-carriage. Miss Susey's my favrite. Dressed alike and in light summer dresses, made up by theirselves for sartin; but they do sit well, sure 'nough. Miss Bell is a keen one for cuttin'; I know she of ould."

"Here's a cloud o' dust. What's this, I wonder? Well, if it isn't Mr Carryten's son! Es, and Ben Saunders. He's a pretty man if you like, Fanny, Ben is; but he's terrible proud now—dothn't look upon a body."

"Betsey, for shame. What's Ben Saunders to yew? A proud fop is Ben, that's what *he* is!"

And so these damsels—or maidens, as a Wettonian would call them—

went on criticising all who passed to the *fête* by the road which their gaze commanded. And many another group of critics was there scattered about the exits from Wetton, most of them favourably disposed, and admiring the gay passengers, but not all; there were a few young ladies who inhabited a debatable ground between the *haut ton* and *bourgeoisie* of Wetton, and who thought they might have been asked: the sarcasms of these fair beings, who had been provoked if they had not been invited, would have made any simple person's hair stand on end. But we will hurry past these groups, if you please, and the fluttering dresses and flying ribbons in the carriages, and get on to this moor-stone (*i.e.*, granite) post lying on the ground, and not yet set in the gateway, on which Uncle Jack Varco and one or two of his friends sat viewing the departures.

"What a thing vanity is now!" said a middle-aged female of the party. "This is very lovely for the minnit; but can yew fancy, Uncle Jack, any *raisonable* beins a-wasting their lives and their substance in sich fervolities? Vie upon mun!" (This was said rather with a view of chiming with Uncle Jack's severe humour, and eliciting his favourable response.)

"My dear," answered Uncle Jack, "I've a-seed the day when yew wasn't a-drove so wild by the sight uv a little vinery. Do 'ee mind when you and me went upon a Easter Monday to zee a woman hanged vor puyseinin' of her husband? I do. Us was so vain as anybody then."

"Do I mind it? Shell I ever forget it? Iss, I do mind it; and I mind all the vine things yew said to me, and how yew giv'd me beer and ginger-breads. I hope yew've a-repented uv your cruel conduct: I hope yew hev."

"My dear, I repented before I was a day oulder; but there, now; leave the past alone. We shall all be jedged, never fear. Look here, now; here's the Colkaton carriage. Madam Fulford do look buxom still, don't her? and not so young nither: onny dree months between she and our Jenny—Jenny Cook, that is now!"

"But look at the young Miss. Dear, dear, there's vine volks ef you like; but her is a perty maiden, isn't her? and deserv'th vine things if anybody dew. Her dothn't look zo plump and fresh though, arter all, now that her draw'th near. I do hope there's nothin' the metter. 'Twas a decline the Squire died of. Isn't her bunnet lovely? the blew trimmin' 'ud be more becomin' ef her chacks wasn't quite so white."

"Uncle Jack," observed a labourer whom we have not before heard, "us hev'n't a-seed thy dear and tender measter yet. I spose th' ould tyrant 'll be there a-droppin' about his blessins, and sugarin' everybody as ef they was green gooseberries."

"Whew. be yew a-speakin' uv, Richard Harvey? A man that hath had the leadin' and orderin' of hundreds of other men, and hev a-brought mun to glory by makin' of mun do their dewty. Is that one for the likes o' yew to be makin' of your jokes upon? Waryers uv all soarts, sawgers and sailors tew, be apt to deal in ungodly words, the Lord forgive mun; but most of et they saith without thort, and mean'th no harm. I knows they that seed th' oul' tyrant, as you calls en, zail into Plymouth Sound a-draggin' after'n a French ship o' war twice the zize uv hes own, what he'd a-took'd in a battle."

"Lord, whe'er a did or no!" exclaimed the female.

"Iss fy, my dear, he den it; his bones hev a-bin broked and his bled



a-drawed. I've a-seed the cuts and dents upon the arms of 'n when he've a-turned up his sleeves in the gair'n. Yew don't know what that there man is a-made of," quoth old Plummybag.

"My conscience!" broke in the female in rather a subdued voice, "ef here esn't our young lord that es to be! Bless the boey; and a-dreavin' of tew hosses, tew; as ef one, or a jackass for that metter, wasn't enough for the likes of he. Ben's a good-lookin' young man tho', say what they will of 'n. What bewtiful hair he've a-got!"

"Ould Saunders's line is a-rennin' off the reel to a perty pace, I reckon," answered Uncle Jack. "That's fine encouragement to fathers to pinch and make money for their childern. What the poor oul' man saved in a year this gay slip 'll squander in a week."

"Ennyhow, Uncle Jack, yew took'd care when yew was stout and strong not to save money for nobody: yew enjuy'd et yourself, I reckon," put in Harvey, who had not quite got over old Plummybag's set down.

"Perhaps I did, my dear. A sinful mortal I've a-bin, the Lord know'th. The only comfort I've a-got is to think that there's others feullisher than me, bad as I be. I've heerd of men that couldn't nither save nor enjuy; steupid ned-dies that pearts wi' their money because they ha'n't the sense to kip et after arnin' et with the sweat o' their breow."

"Bless 'ee, Richard, you caught that," said the female. Richard Harvey, who was a sober, hard-working man in general, would get lively once in six weeks or so; and the anecdotes current of his sufferings in keel\* alleys and wrestling-rings did not bear witness to his

extreme prudence or sharpness. The quick succession of the vehicles, however, kept producing new ideas, and left but little time for sparring. Before half-past eleven the last of them had gone by. Even the lawyers and the auctioneer, who were tied, or wished to make it appear that they were tied, to their offices by great press of business, managed to be on the road before noon. It was a drive of between two and three hours, and there were a great many things to be done to pass the afternoon. The principal thing (of course after eating and drinking) was to ascend a high hill which was part of a moor, and a sort of Pisgah from whence might be seen an immense extent of beautiful country. No one had ever seen the use of making a carriage-road to its summit, and so it would be necessary to climb thither on foot. Then there were plenty of trout in the stream, and the gentlemen would, of course, endeavour to bring it to pass that the ladies should catch some of them. And there was, skirting the moor, a wood full of glades, where something sentimental might possibly take place, and from which there were glorious peeps of landscape. Miss Tarroway, I have reason to believe, privately reconnoitred this wood some days before the picnic, and by means of that preliminary and prophylactic measure was not only prepared to lead her curate unerringly to the views which would delight his soul, but also to express the emotions and observations proper to each of them. This wood was the quarter which the party first made for; indeed, it was properly the goal or point of reunion of the picnic. By the time it had been cursorily examined everybody might be expected to have become hungry and thirsty,

\* Skittle.

and the attendants would be prepared to administer to those necessitous conditions. Some of the party managed to put up their horses at a small village a mile off, or in farm stables; but the greater part brought their forage with them, and found some shade where the horses were much more refreshed than they would have been within stone walls. High spirits were the order of the day, but they were not quite universal. Gertrude Fulford, although she would not on any account have absented herself, had come with an aching heart. Her mother could not walk much or fast; of course Gertrude accommodated herself to this infirmity, which was also known to the crafty Admiral, who turned it to account, and managed to keep with the two ladies in the first saunter about the wood. I think it was the Misses Tautbrace whom Harding was squiring at that time, their parent having cleverly placed them under his convoy in order that he (Tautbrace) might attend to his own affairs. Mr Ben Saunders also was somewhat depressed on first alighting from his carriage and encountering the company. He had learned by this time that ladies did not particularly care to be accosted in the style which he thought ought to delight them; he was doubtful about his powers of pleasing in any other style, and so was silent and ill at ease. There were one or two ladies present who, though they had contrived to get invitations, were, like himself, rather out of their element. These would have, of course, welcomed his attentions, as they were not likely to get anything better; and Ben, a simple person might have fancied, would hail them as a refuge in his desolate condition; but no, his mind was set upon other things. There had been times, too, when Ben, if he had felt awkward on such an

occasion, would have joined himself to some other spirits of about his own breeding, and smoked cigars and laughed noisily, and have certainly drunk too much wine. But he did none of these things. He had found out that, small as might be his opportunities however careful he might be, he certainly would spoil his case altogether by any vulgarity such as no doubt entered into his mind. He had faith, too, in his dream, and quite expected that what he could not do for himself, the power that sent the vision would do for him. So he restrained his dispositions, and, if he seemed rather out of his element, was at any rate not offensive. Trusting his luck, he hovered within view of the Colkaton party, inwardly chafing at his friend the Admiral, who, of all men, was the greatest barrier to his approach. The day was, however, but young as yet, and none could say how circumstances might alter before night. He would see. And while this was passing in Ben's mind, the merry-makers were saluting each other, and forming into gay groups. Some of the ladies' first impulse was, I am afraid, to fasten their observation on other ladies' dresses, and be as critical as the milliner's two girls had been; and there was plenty there to engage such minds; for not only did Wetton display its best, but several strangers contributed some foreign matter for dissection. Believe me, it was a pretty party to look at, and, what was better, it was on the whole a joyous one. As happened at the Butterfly's Ball, of which we have all heard, the repast was spread "beneath a green oak, which for ages had stood." It was unpacked and ready, just in time to prevent the groups from straying too far away; and when an accomplished youth (articled clerk to Mr John Roe the



attorney, but who liked to be called *solicitor*) sounded on his cornet "The Roast Beef of Old England," a trifle out of time and tune, and with one or two of the notes breaking loose in a wild unearthly manner, the company came chirruping in like a flock of poultry at the voice of the farm dame. A little scrambling and shuffling, but not much, and they were all seated on the grass, except Mrs Fulford, who experienced a little pain in stooping and rising, and who therefore sate on an exposed part of the oak's roots, cushioned on wraps. I need not say how briskly the gentlemen moved about, or how pleased the ladies were with their attentions. I need not record the pretty protests against filling the glasses with champagne, or the gentle violence with which that outrage was nevertheless accomplished; neither does it matter to repeat much of the conversation or to advert to the bill of fare; and more especially may these things be passed over as I have something to relate which directly affects the story. I said, I think, that Mrs Fulford had a seat of state prepared for her which could not easily be moved; but I did not say, neither did anybody perceive at the time when it was arranged, that just there, taking advantage of a tiny opening in the branches, the May sun looked through so impudently as would have put a Front de Bœuf out of countenance; how much more then must he have abashed poor Mrs Fulford! That good lady, soon perceiving this affront, instinctively spread her parasol, which motion the Admiral perceiving, he insisted upon holding the screen, in order that the lady might proceed with her refreshment. But this gave rise to an amiable dispute, because Mrs Fulford contended that the Admiral could get no refresh-

ment himself, neither render assistance to any other person, if she monopolised him thus, which she protested she would not do; Gertrude said *she* could hold the parasol perfectly well without interrupting her attentions to the viands. And the Admiral of course made a solemn declaration that he would rather have the honour of being thus employed than partake of the daintiest meal ever put before an epicure, and positively refused to relinquish his office. Then the ladies declared they would not eat a bit more, and would move away immediately, which Tautbrace said would break his heart. And at last the contention, all in the most kind and considerate way, waxed very sharp, and Gertrude had actually risen, much to the Admiral's horror, with the intention of assisting her mother to shift her berth, when *presto!* the amiable row was brought to an end by the disappearance of the cause of it. Mr Benjamin Saunders, a witness of the scene, had quietly got his dust-coat out of the drag, mounted into the tree, and so disposed the garment that it acted effectually as a blind.

There were murmurs of applause at this act of gallantry. The two ladies, without seeing, and, perhaps, without caring who it was that had come to the rescue, said—"Oh, *thank* you; so *very* kind:" and Tautbrace, who couldn't but be thankful in his heart, called out, "Done in seaman-like style, sir; thank you." But they were not destined to get off with this anonymous sort of acknowledgment; for Mr Benjamin, in swinging himself down, came upon a hole or a stump, or some other inequality, and fell prostrate—not a bit hurt, you know. He was up and brushing his knees in a second, "not a rap the worse," as he assured everybody; but then, don't you see, it was impossible any

longer to rest satisfied with impersonal thanks. While a dozen voices asked Ben whether he had hurt himself, the Fulford ladies couldn't do less than express sorrow at his accident, and tell him how obliged they felt. Even Tautbrace condescended to say, "Ah, glad it was no worse: I could teach you to come out of the rigging on to the deck in better style than that." As Gertrude resumed her place after this little episode, she caught Lydia's eye, who gave her a nod and a meaning smile, which made her feel uncomfortable. Benjamin after this thought he might venture to do a little of the duty of a host, and commenced handing round some of the viands, not foolishly offering them straight to Mrs Fulford or her daughter, but beginning some way from them and dispensing his aliment "quite promiscuous," as he called it, till he brought it to them in turn. It wouldn't have been like them if, when he reached them, they hadn't again said something civil. "Egad," said Mr Saunders to himself, "the retiring ticket is the right one after all;" and he resolved that he wouldn't even take a glass of champagne lest that might lead to another glass, and the other glass to a relaxation of the guard which he was desirous of keeping over himself. So delighted was he with this quiet way of doing things that he became inventive and diplomatic in a small way, and actually had some change out of his friend the Admiral, whom he out-maneuvred and thwarted. This was the way he did it. The ladies having risen from the banquet, strolled about by themselves a little, to give the gentlemen a chance of getting some of the good things. Ben remained, and got something to eat beside Tom Coryton. As soon as the edge was off most of their appetites, the great idea seemed to be

challenging the two recruiting officers—in whose honour the entertainment had been given—to drink champagne. Hardinge, who saw the fashion that was likely to prevail, made his escape after a glass or two, leaving his successor—to whom this mode of enjoyment seemed more congenial—to bear the brunt of the hob-nobbing. Ben, as I have said, wholly refrained from wine, and so he also had soon done with the provisions, and got up to have a few sly puffs at a weed. Going into shadow for this purpose, he got his fire up, and immediately after perceived Lieutenant Hardinge leaning against the trunk of a tree endeavouring to ignite some German tinder with a flint and steel (light wasn't so easily produced in those days as it is now), and chipping away ineffectually.

"Allow me to offer you a light, sir," said Ben, going up to him. "I hope you're enjoying of yourself. We've got a jolly fine day, and it looks as if everything was well greased, and likely to work smoothly."

"Nothing could go off better," answered Hardinge; "yes, thank you, I'm enjoying it very much, and so I think is everybody. I never saw ladies enter into a thing of the kind with more spirit."

"The very thing I was saying to my friend Coryton. Tom, says I, no trouble to amuse 'em to-day; frisky as young lambs. There's one poor lady, though, a little foundered, and I'm afraid she's rather spoiling her daughter's amusement. I would gladly see if I couldn't assist 'em, only perhaps they mightn't like it."

This hint was enough for Hardinge's good-nature. He ascertained that Mrs Fulford was the lady spoken of, and set off in quest of her. She and Gertrude had only moved to the other side of the oak. The Admiral was still busy with his



prog as he called it. Poor Gertrude coloured to the temples when she saw Hardinge approach. Mrs Fulford, in answer to his inquiries, said she had been suffering from a slight sprain which rather crippled her (I believe that she was subject to rheumatic gout), and could not move about very freely. Then she talked all about the morning's adventures, and asked if it wasn't kind of Mr Saunders to put up his coat to shade her. It was hanging on the boughs still.

"I say," called Hardinge to Ben, who was within hail, "you'll be forgetting your dust-coat; hadn't it better come down?"

Ben thought it would be better down, and straightway proceeded to mount and fetch it. While he was doing so, he could not help overhearing what was being said so close to him, and he was aware that another amicable altercation was in progress, the question being this time, what should be done about mounting the hill and seeing the prospect. Mrs Fulford could not walk up, that was certain. Gertrude insisted upon staying with her; but Hardinge offered to do this, and begged that Gertrude would join a party about to ascend. The elder lady declared that she would allow of no such arrangement. She was perfectly well able to amuse herself for three quarters of an hour, and would have nobody detained on her account. But the opposition persisted, and the debate became animated.

"Look here, sir," said Ben, going up to the group with his coat on his arm and addressing Hardinge, "I shan't go up the hill. I've seen it hundreds of times. I'm going to keep about here and save my legs, he, he! Now, if Madam Fulford'll trust herself to my care while you walk with the young lady, I think that'll about meet the difficulty, eh?"

"Yes, yes," said Mrs Fulford, who was probably not ignorant that the proposed walk might be very agreeable to her daughter. "That will do charmingly. Mr Saunders will, I am sure, do any service that I may need of him; and now I insist that you two go on. I've quite determined, Gertrude."

Well, it wasn't perhaps quite the arrangement that Gertrude would have preferred—that is, she would rather not have had Mr Saunders take a part in it; but a good deal of it was agreeable beyond her hopes. Is it wonderful that she allowed herself to be driven away?

"I shall be somewhere to hand, ma'am," said Ben; "call when you want anything."

There were many of them getting in motion by this time, some bound for the stream, some for the wood. The Tautbrace ladies not finding Hardinge return, had betaken themselves to the parent wing, and so rather hampered the Admiral, who did not know what had been doing in relation to his lady-love. Miss Tarraway hadn't quite done with the wood, and again plunged the curate into its recesses. Mr Tom Coryton, while sitting at meat, had been visited with the idea of a certain curve which had taken fast hold of him, and he was seen strolling along in a rapt condition, his hands clasped behind him, his eyes on the grass, trying to work out mentally the equation thereof. Him, without ceremony, his friend Saunders awoke with a shout. "Look here, Tom," said Ben, and then went on with a confidential communication of some two minutes' duration, and ended with "See, old fellow?" Tom, it is to be presumed, saw; for he nodded his head and moved swiftly off along the edge of the wood.

It was a pretty sight, that sylvan scene, with the little groups van-

ishing into the mazes, and becoming partially visible again here and there as they sauntered on. You heard a merry laugh, and casting your eyes toward the sound, just caught the flutter of a gay summer robe, which was lost again in the green immediately; or, perhaps, you saw a shoulder and arm in broadcloth, stretching up among the prickles of a thorn-tree, and rifting it of its profuse blossom. Some of those bound for the hill had broke cover in a few minutes, and might be seen scattered over the moor treading on heather and spring flowers, and throwing back in the landscape the purple brow of the eminence to which they were strolling. Many-coloured parasols had to be spread as soon as the shelter of the wood was quitted; and these added much to the variegated prospect. Mrs Fulford from where she stood was able to see for some way her daughter and Hardinge wending along quite by themselves. She sighed as she thought what an unpromising affair this looked, and wished that Gertrude's fancy had taken a more practicable turn. Perhaps the outline of the Admiralty House at Plymouth crossed her mind's eye at this time: I don't know. If it did, she didn't let it remain there long. But, all at once, as she saw some of the dresses in the distance moved by the wind (which was a little fresher on the moor), she thought how stupid she had been in not making her daughter take a warm shawl with her, and she so delicate just now. She had not, however, to fret long over this, for I have a suspicion that another pair of eyes besides hers had caught sight of Gertrude and her companion; at any rate, Miss Tarraway and her reverend attendant crossed her path just then, making for the moor.

"Oh, Mr Norcott," called the

lady, and at the sound of her voice, Ben Saunders, issuing from some convenient retreat, ran and fetched the curate, who, without his intervention, might not have heard the summons, for Lydia seemed in haste to get on. Lydia, however, gladly charged herself, or rather her attendant, with the wraps, and moved off at once, saying that she wouldn't lose a moment lest Gertrude should take cold on that bleak, exposed hill. It rejoiced the curate to see a proof of the goodness of Lydia's heart, in that she, although certainly not over strong, and with delicate lungs, kept him almost at a trot in her anxiety to overtake her friend and cover her with the warm shawl. On the hillside they met Admiral Tautbrace and one of his daughters (the other having secured a beau), who said they had been looking also for Gertrude, who must, however, have taken another path round the hill, as they had been some way further on to a point where there was a long view of the hillside, but could not see her. The Admiral had deceived himself about the course taken by Gertrude, and he consequently put Miss Tarraway on a somewhat devious track, which would have pained that young lady's kind heart had she suspected it.

When Mrs Fulford saw Ben Saunders appear at her call, it began to prick her conscience a little—or rather, let me say, her natural kindness was pained—that Mr Saunders, who was remaining there entirely on her account, should be treated with such extreme frigidity as this. Of course she had not forgotten Ben's former mistake; but notwithstanding that, she couldn't bear to let him sneak about there in the background, and was just thinking what excuse she could make for calling him up and saying something gracious, when the hero made



his appearance unsolicited, and accompanied by Mr Coryton, another person unknown who looked like a farm-labourer, and a wheel-chair.

"We've took the liberty, ma'am," said Benjamin, taking off his hat, "of having up this little convenience, which you'll find nice and easy, if you'll please to step in. I'll answer for't, and so will Mr Coryton" (Tom uncovers), "that we'll get you to the hill-top with less jolting than you had in your carriage coming out. There's no hoss-road, but we'll manage the chair right enough."

Well, the dowager was much pleased (how could she help being so!) by this attention, and at sight of the ready conveyance, which seemed to have come out of fairyland. There it stood, however, quite material, and very fit for the transport designed. "Really, Mr Saunders, I don't know how to——" she was beginning, when Ben put in gently, "If you should think proper to get in, ma'am, I'll tell you where the chair came from as we walk along." Mrs Fulford did get in, very willingly, the labourer took the handle of the chair; and Mr Coryton and Mr Saunders brought up the rear, prepared to push and lift where necessary. The lady was profuse of her acknowledgments, and of her admiration at the readiness with which the chair had been procured.

"You wouldn't think much of it, ma'am," explained Ben, "if you knew how well acquainted I am about here. There's people living just below there—Parsons their name is—which had a boy to school at Mr Coryton's. Holiday times me and Tom (that's Mr Coryton) used to come out here with Parsons, and range about the moor and fish. I said, you may remember, that I'd been over the hill hundreds of times, and so, I suppose, I have."

"Oh, indeed! but that does not explain how the Bath chair came to be here, so much to the purpose. Your friend Parsons didn't use it, did he?"

"No; he used to hate it, and so did me and Tom; because, you see, when we wanted to go a-fishing, we was often kept in for two hours, dragging of his old grandmother about the sunny garden walks."

"Yes, now I see; and you kindly and cleverly remembered the chair, and borrowed it for me. How surprised they all will be to see me amongst them—my daughter especially, who will be fretting so about me that she will lose all enjoyment of the view! By the by, the sun which dazzled me so much I can't see at all now; where is it?"

"Just entering *Gemini*," answered Tom Coryton; "declination twenty degrees, twenty minutes, north, or thereabouts; right ascension——"

"Nonsense, Tom," interrupted Ben. "The sun's behind you, ma'am; you'd soon find that out if you was outside the chair."

The above surmise of the dowager was, however, not exactly accurate. Miss Fulford's heart was so full of other emotion during this ramble, that it is probable she thought but little even of her mother, supposed to be sitting solitary under the trees. Ben Saunders had not, of course, a suspicion of how dangerous an escort he had selected, or he would have wished that his "dodge," as he called it, for disappointing Admiral Tautbrace, had never entered his brain. It looked almost as if the Dream-agency had moved Ben to this, to try and correct the grievous misdirection that had occurred, and put an end to the comedy of errors now being enacted.

The fresh moorland air had made Hardinge more lively than usual,

so that his humour didn't harmonise at all with Gertrude's dejected spirit. He told her, as they moved over the velvet carpet of the moor, of the last good regimental jokes as communicated by a correspondent at headquarters; asked her if she didn't think the hill before them would be a pleasant place in a snow-storm; and said that towards evening she must certainly throw a fly and catch a trout. In reply to which remarks he was only requested to observe how soothing were the air and the scene; how they disposed one to serious thought; and, after all, how much more real enjoyment there was in contemplation than in material things, or in the active pleasures of life. Hardinge agreed, but observed that there was nothing in the sentiment which Miss Fulford had expressed prejudicial to fishing, which, as everybody knew, was "the contemplative man's recreation." Gertrude sighed; it was plain that in this, probably their last, unobserved interview, he would show nothing but levity. Hardinge observed the sigh, though, and immediately expressed his apprehension that the ascent was becoming too much for her: he asked if she would like to return—which idea she refused to entertain, saying that she was quite able to proceed, and would not on any account lose the view from the crest of the hill. "Then," said Hardinge, "take a rest before you do the remainder; under this tall rock we shall find a soft seat—nay, I think I see a bench there; in a few minutes we will ascend again." So they sat on the seat under the rock, and that was why the Admiral could not see them when he took his look-out. Here they remained some little time; and Hardinge, who thought, silly fellow, that the beauties of nature appeared to be the subject most agreeable to his com-

panion, pointed out the course of the trout-stream which wound away below them, and gave her the names of certain farms and villages lying around them, with which he had become acquainted in his shooting excursions. Ten minutes were consumed in this way; the unhappy girl felt that she must soon move on again, but the despair within her made her cling yet to the seat which seemed to afford her last chance.

"You will have but little more fishing in the Devonshire streams," said Gertrude; "shall you regret them?"

"That shall I; but our fellows tell me they have some fishing near headquarters. I fancy it is nothing like this."

"Perhaps," said Gertrude, faltering a little, "perhaps you may come back to revisit the old scenes."

"Well, I should like to, and to revisit some of my old friends too, if they will permit me to call them so; but——"

"But what? I am sure all of us quite admit your right to call us your friends. You will surely come again when the sporting season returns; it would hardly be kind or even civil not to do so."

"Do not imagine, Miss Fulford, that it would be other than the sincerest pleasure to me to come hither again if the opportunity were afforded me, but——"

"But again," said Gertrude, pettishly.

"Well, you know, I can't help the accidents of my profession; I wish I could. But I much fear we shall have gone abroad before another winter."

If he had been looking at Gertrude's face, he would have seen that it became suddenly as pale as death. "Abroad! what, where?" she said, rather wildly.

"I am told that we are to go to India, which is a villanous shame,



for, properly speaking, it is not our turn; there are two regiments before us. It's all because—— Miss Fulford, you are ill; I'm sure of it."

The poor girl had given way. Hardinge had to support her with his arm to prevent her falling back, and her weight came so heavily upon him, that he was persuaded that she had fainted. But she wasn't quite insensible, for he heard her murmuring (his face being very close to hers), "No, it is nothing, nothing; it will pass."

I have said that Hardinge was no lady-killer, that he was not a coxcomb: nevertheless, I cannot say that an idea did not cross his mind connecting this emotion with his departure. He dismissed that thought, however, and reflected that Gertrude had been ailing for some time, that the exertion of climbing the hill must have been too great for her strength, and that it was a shame to him to impute such folly to a girl known to be sensible and discreet. How long he could have shut his eyes to the truth it is impossible to say; but he had not much opportunity for pondering the matter, being disturbed by voices above them and behind the rock, whereof one said, "They may be below the rock; there is a seat there;" that was the Curate's; and another called out, "Hollo! anything afloat here? give a hail, or make a signal, will you?" that was the Admiral's. Gertrude rallied with a strong effort and sat up—just in time, for, in a second, Lydia was round the rock and upon her.

"My dear, dear girl!" exclaimed Miss Tarraway, almost beside herself at sight of Gertrude's condition, "I was afraid it would be so. Here you are, poor darling, almost starved to death. So, so; now another" (almost smothering her with wraps);

"and this about your poor white neck. Oh, what a pity we didn't find you sooner! We have been looking everywhere, indeed we have. There, are you warmer now, dear? Chafe her other hand, Minnie" (this to Miss Tautbrance). "Oh, whatever will Mrs Fulford say? and I walked as fast as my legs would carry me."

"That indeed you did," said the Curate; "I am witness that no time was lost."

Meanwhile the Admiral, who didn't entirely like the look of things, referred to Hardinge for explanation; but so candid and ingenuous was that young man's account, that Tautbrance, although, as he said, no milksop, and knowing what was what, could not think there had been anything more than a very intelligible accident. "Poor child! more out of sorts than was suspected; these confounded hills very trying; if there had been an older man beside her he would have known what to do, and might have taken the attack in time, by George! but these sprawling youngsters, especially soldiers who were notoriously unhandy, what the devil good were they?"

He got Lydia off her by means of Minnie, who obeyed her parent's signal; and now perceiving that her eyes were wide open and her face certainly not deficient in colour, the gallant old tar took Gertrude's hand in his, and said everything to comfort and reassure her. She said she had been but momentarily overcome: it was nothing, really: she could walk quite well now, she was sure.

"Then, I think," said Tautbrance, kindly, "that I must take the command. There must be no more risk run till you are once more safe with your mother. Here, soldier, you take these two young ladies in tow—that's a good fellow; and you and I, Mr Norcott, will see if we

can't get our fair friend here under way and take her gently back to the wood."

In vain did Gertrude protest that she was ashamed of causing all this fuss, and that she was quite able now to follow the rest of the party to the hill-top, which was not so far off. The Admiral was peremptory, and said he wouldn't for all the world run the risk of another attack: neither would Gertrude have escaped the fate of being taken to the rear ready to be lodged in an ambulance, if the party hadn't been all surprised at meeting Mrs Fulford, who, aided by her vigorous propellers, was coming up the hill at a round pace and with a delightful degree of comfort.

Disappointment, come how it may, is hard enough to bear. When we have toiled and hoped and failed, and then toiled and hoped again and again failed, and this not twice nor thrice but many times, the disappointment, become familiar, is not less bitter, though it may be less acutely felt. But when, after hope has been long deferred, the much-desired object has been suddenly presented to us, brought within a hand-grasp, and then as suddenly dashed away and dissipated, the anguish of disappointment is struck in with a triple dart. If delay makes the heart sick, the pangs of Tantalus pierce it through and through. Don't expect me to describe what Gertrude Fulford felt when she was taken away from that seat under the rock, because I can't do it. Cruelly stricken she was, as may be imagined; and the stroke was none the less cruel because her nature abhorred outward manifestation of suffering. In all her misery she was prompted to preserve a quiet demeanour; the effort in this direction may have cost her much, yet she could not but make it. The unexpected sight of her mother

was, perhaps, the greatest relief that could have come to her. It delivered her at any rate from Admiral Tautbrance's stupid attentions, and assured her of the presence of a sympathising bosom, albeit she might not rest her head on it at once and tell out her piercing sorrow. Mrs Fulford could only guess at the nature of her daughter's mischance. She listened to the Admiral's account—short, to the point, and intended to be as little alarming as possible—and to Lydia's regrets at not having overtaken the poor dear girl before she became so shockingly chilled. But she perceived that there was more than bodily affliction troubling the patient; and she understood, when Gertrude expressed a decided wish to go on to the hill-top, that it was better to let her have her way. To concede somewhat to the Admiral's solicitude, she insisted upon leaving the chair and leaning upon that old gallant's arm for a while (which she could do very well, being now near the brow of the hill, and clear of the steepest and roughest ascent), and on placing Gertrude in the chair. "Well, I'll be hanged," said Ben Saunders to himself, "if things ain't working bravely! I thought coaching up the old lady was a good bit of luck, and now here I am in attendance upon the young one. My fortune 'll do things for me better than I can do 'em for myself. I made a mess of it when I tried to push on matters. Keep quiet's the game, and let the pixies do things their own way. Very well, pixy gentlemen and ladies, I'm your most obedient." So, if anything required to be done in front, Ben made a sign to Tom and Tom did it, Ben scrupulously keeping himself in the background. Once when Tom at the front wheel and Ben straining at the axle behind were enabling the labourer to get the little vehicle



over a channel without much of a jerk, Gertrude began, "Oh, it was so very kind of you to find a chair, Mr —," and then perceiving that it was not Ben, but a person with whom she was not acquainted, she stopped short.

"You thought it was a known quantity instead of an unknown, ma'am, didn't you?" observed Tom. "Mr Saunders is behind assisting the progression. You may put *x* for me till you ascertain my value."

And then Ben, stepping forward, most respectfully asked if there was anything he could do for her. Partly bewildered by Tom's jargon, and partly confounded by her own thoughts, Gertrude answered a little incoherently, and was vexed with herself for so doing, and stammered, and blushed. Ben observed her answers, too, when Lydia or any of the party came to the side of the chair, and he thought them rather odd. "If I know anything about females," thought Benjamin, "that girl's in love. The next question is, with who? Perhaps it's one of the gentlemen on the right of the chair; perhaps it's one on the left; or it may be the gentleman in front" (the labourer—this of course was a pleasantry); "or suppose it should be the gentleman behind, eh?" Ben, we remember, hadn't a bad opinion of himself, and his attendant sprites seemed bent on using his vanity to foment ridiculous and mischievous mistakes.

Well, there is not much more to be said about the picnic. After a while Gertrude gave up the chair to her mother, and walked down the hill very bravely on the Admiral's arm, who, to amuse her, told her of a stern chase of a Frenchman which he had executed in the Capricious frigate, both ships going at exactly equal speed for ninety-six hours, at

the end of which time the chase disappeared in a fog off Ushant. She was, of course, particularly interested in the various luffings, portings, pipings, and bracings with which the account was studded, as well as in the "dozen apiece" which the Captain of the Capricious thought it his duty to administer to the three seamen who were the last men down off the fore, main, and mizzen yards respectively. At even the fishing was done, and the whole plan carried out; and the party got home, as well as I can recollect, without further accident,—most of them delighted with the day's pleasure—one, as we know, bringing back a barbed arrow in her breast.

"A junkettin," quoth Uncle Jack Varco, "mostal'aysend'th in a quar'l, or a accident, or at laist in a then-der storm that send'th mun hawme streamin', leakin' wet. 'Tis one of the traps that the devil teel'th \* for poor mortals. But his reverence must ha been aslaipd o' Teusday, for I've a-heerd of no calamity whatever."

Lieutenant Hardinge took leave of all his friends and departed from Wetton; and he was succeeded by a young man who, though far more restless, was much less liked. The summer came on quietly, and was rolling away without much incident, except that Mrs and Miss Fulford went to Scarborough or somewhere in the north for a thorough change, and Mr Norcott and Miss Tarraway were formally announced as an engaged couple. Mr Ben Saunders, very much influenced by his dream, and influenced no doubt by his own silly conceit, had built up a little romantic edifice in which he mentally resided a great deal. He persuaded himself that, as the vision had indicated, Miss Fulford was certainly very favourably disposed

towards him, but that family pride and other obstacles operated powerfully against her attachment. She had been taken away from the beloved object to other scenes and other company, perhaps herself willing to eradicate her passion if she could. Now, if this were the case, Ben thought the way to thwart the opposition to the match would be to follow the young lady to her retreat and let her see him day by day. But there were objections to this plan: it would be inconvenient to the business, and it would be a departure from the resolution he had come to not to interfere too actively with the work which the pixies had undertaken and were carrying out. The ladies would be at home again in the autumn, which was not far off, and he didn't generally strike so superficially that an impression could be effaced in two or three months. But, unfortunately, as the autumn drew near, unfavourable accounts were received in Wetton of Miss Fulford's health; coming, I believe, through Admiral Tautbrance, who was also absent from home, and probably not far from the young lady. She was reported to be very weak and ill; then, a week or two later, unable to return to Colkatton at present; and at last, before the end of September, it was announced that the doctors had ordered her to Madeira for the winter. When Ben heard of this he thought it would never do to remain longer inactive. Still he had his doubts about presenting himself suddenly before her in her weak condition. A rash move might, he saw, damage him materially. The only middle course was to write to her by some safe envoy, through whom the billet would be sure to reach her own hands, assure her of his admiration and unswerving affection, and bid her not to allow her spirits to fail; also to state his readiness to set off immediately for Scarborough if she

should inform him that she deemed that course advisable. Yes, the letter was the right thing; what a pity that he had not thought of it before! So Ben sat down to indite a letter, which did not prove to be an easy task. Three or four times over he revised it and wrote it out fair; and when he could imagine no further improvement in its terms, he was still dissatisfied with it, and did not despatch it, but kept it by him and read it over every two or three hours without liking it any better. At length, seeing that he had done all that his own skill could accomplish, he determined reluctantly to get the assistance of a friend, and with that intention summoned Tom Coryton to council, who had been away for some time, but was now in Wetton again. Without mentioning names, Ben informed Tom of the state of his affections, and of the necessity of epistolary communication: but he admitted that he had not yet explained himself on paper, and that his attempts to do so had not been satisfactory to himself. "So Tom, old chap," said he, "I want you to look over the thing and advise me a little, and help me where I've come short. I hardly think it's ardent enough."

"H'm," answered Tom, "I don't know much about ardour, but I'll tell you whether any step in the argument is incorrect; let's see now. *Dearest Angle*. Why, I thought it was a young woman that you were addressing. An angle is the inclination of two lines to each other, and may be either obtuse——"

"None of your nonsense, Tom, about angles. I can't stand it; hang me if I can! What have angles to do with this?"

"Only this, that if the angle in question happens to be at all acute, she'll think the letter comes from a madman."



"Why, what on earth do you mean, Tom?"

"I mean that, though an angle is a very good thing in its way, and not at all to be despised, yet it isn't quite a term to be applied to one's sweetheart. We have heard of 'the loves of the triangles,' of course, but I fancy you meant to call the queen of your fancy an angel, which is spelled—g-e-l, not g-l-e; do you see?"

"Never mind; that's easily altered," observed Ben.

"Yes, that's easily altered, perhaps; but the whole thing seems to me to abound with blunders of the same kind; for instance, it is not usual to say to a lady that you 'hope to be able to seduce her to write you a line;' neither is it——"

"Go to the devil, Tom Coryton! I wish I hadn't shown you the letter at all, since you do nothing but make game of it."

"Nay," answered Tom, "I do nothing of the kind; and if I did, it would be better that I should make game of you, than that I should let you make a fool of yourself, which you surely would do if you sent forward that angular epistle."

"Devil take the letter!" yelled Ben, seizing the precious billet, and tearing it to shreds. "Now, then, what am I to do? will you write a better?"

"No, I can't. Although I see that that isn't properly worked out, I can't produce a neat demonstration of affection. Not in my line a bit. Anything you like in the way of the calculus, or analytical trigonometry, but I've not graduated in amatory correspondence."

"Nothing to be got out of you, then, that's clear. Sorry I asked you."

"It hasn't been made at all clear that nothing is to be got out of me. It's hard to prove a negative. I can't write a love-letter, that I confess. But I may be able to give you a bit of useful advice."

"I wish to heaven you would!"

"Well, then, look here. If I were you I would open my mind a little to Mr Norcott, the curate. If he refuses to have anything to do with the matter, that will be the worst that can ensue. He's perfectly safe; he won't tell on you. But if he should incline to coach you a bit (that means, give you a lift, you know), he'll show you how to make your enunciation neatly, and how to establish your case. He's just managed an affair for himself, which may incline him to give a little aid to a collateral figure (brother spooney, you know), and which is a proof that he knows something of the science of love-making."

The impetuous Benjamin did not at first choose to adopt this course, but preferred to be very angry with Tom Coryton, and to say cruel things to him, which things the senior "Op" heard with equanimity, knowing from long experience the process by which Ben assimilated an idea. Mr Saunders did apply to the Curate.

"If this is a straightforward, honest business, of course I'll assist you, Mr Saunders, with all my heart," said Norcott; "but you must take me into your confidence entirely. I can have nothing to do with a scheme in which some of the names are left blank, and the character of which I am unable to appreciate. You must see, yourself, that I am bound to act thus."

"It's all right; you may rely upon it," urged Benjamin. "I don't think I've any right to tell the lady's name till she lets me to. The fact is, I should never have known of her sentiments myself, if it hadn't been for a most uncommon occurrence. I had a dream about it, when, I declare, I'd never been thinking of such a thing."

"A dream!"

"Yes, a dream. A most particular vivid thing ; letting me know not only the state of the young lady's mind, but how everything was to be worked out up to the wedding, which will be a grand one." (These last words in a most impressive voice.)

"Do you mean to tell me that you meditate making an offer of marriage relying on the evidence of a dream?"

"Not at all. The dream gave me the tip, you know. But it's been fulfilling of itself ever since. It's a good while ago that I dreamt it. No difficulty in naming the time. The very night afore my poor father met his death."

Norcott started. He couldn't but remember another dream dreamt on that same night, and more intimately connected with the terrible event of the senior Saunders's death. That was the reason why he had so much patience with Benjamin's romance. "A year ago," he said, "I should have laughed at your dream, and bidden you behave like a man of sense. If I don't treat your dream as mere moonshine, it is because I know of another dream, *dreamed on the same night as yours*, which had some meaning in it, though I have never been able to discover its precise object. The dream, however, to which I allude, was not dreamed here." (This last remark was tenderly made to prevent Benjamin from connecting the dream with his terrible loss.)

"Neither was mine," responded Ben. "I wasn't home when poor father came to his sudden end. I was to Plymouth on business. 'Twas there I dreamt it."

"At Plymouth!"

"Certainly ; at Plymouth. I slept at the Royal Hotel there—can give you the number of the room if you like—25, a room I

always get if I can, because there's a nice writing-table in it where I can make up my accounts, you see. Is there anything so odd in this, sir? It seems to astonish you."

The Curate didn't answer for a minute or two, being powerfully impressed by what he heard, as one may suppose. At length he said, "I beg your pardon. It does astonish me more than I can explain just now. But my astonishment mustn't make me appear to play fast and loose with your love affair. I come back to what I said before. You must trust me wholly, or I decline to have anything to do with it."

Now it had been pleasant to Benjamin to find that Mr Norcott was inclined to treat dreams with some respect. He really did not know to what quarter to turn if he should lose the opportunity of securing the clergyman's assistance. Tom Coryton had assured him, and besides, he felt himself, that Norcott would faithfully keep his secret. And, as he said to himself, there was nothing in the matter to be ashamed of. His counsellor might smile at his presumption, but that was the worst that he had to dread. So, after a little longer parley, he made up his mind. "Well, then, here goes," said Ben ; and he told out his whole dream, not omitting the coronet, to which he called special attention. Ben likewise mentioned the incident which appeared to him to corroborate the dream, and especially the favour in which he had latterly found himself with Mrs and Miss Fulford. Norcott heard him through patiently. When Benjamin ended, Norcott said, "I feel now more than ever satisfied that I was right (so, I hope, will you feel, too) in insisting upon full confidence. I am better able to advise, probably, than you expected to find me. You are altogether deceived,



I assure you, and pursuing a phantom which must bring you to trouble if you persist!"

"Stop, sir," answered Ben; "I can judge for myself in that matter. I don't think it's a phantom, or that any harm's coming. Nothing venture, nothing win, you know. You own yourself that you have known another dream come true."

"Yours never will, Mr Saunders; of that I am certain. Listen to me, and remember that what I am about to tell you is, as your communication to me was, in strict confidence. I have reason to know that the affections of the young lady of whom you spoke are engaged in a totally different direction from what you suppose. You look incredulous, and perhaps may reasonably ask how I can be informed on such a subject. Well, I heard what I know from Miss Tarroway, who had means of being informed. I cannot say more. I entered on the subject with you fully disposed to help you if I found that, with propriety, I could. I find my office must be to undeceive you."

It wasn't pleasant, of course, to have his air-built castle blown into bits, and Benjamin resisted the demolition as he generally resisted a conviction that was at variance with his wishes or preconceived ideas. This was a new phase of his difficulties altogether. He had known of no rival, and he had far too good an opinion of himself to imagine one on whose account he need be in the least alarmed. But he couldn't deny that a rival might exist for all that, or that he might have existed and made sure of his prize before the dream was dreamed. Norcott, he knew, could have no object but a benevolent one in urging him as he did to dispel his vain fancy, and, if he had had an object, he never would have represented the matter untruly. In the end, Ben

thanked the Curate, and said he would take no step for the present, but would think over it.

Mr Norcott also had something to think over, and greatly perturbed he was by his thoughts. It was a curious thing that he should have become the depositary of these two dreams; but a more curious thing that the dreams should have been dreamed. Hardinge's vision, so awfully fulfilled, had been remarkable enough; but how it added to the mystery of the story that the son of the doomed man was, at the time of the dream, asleep in the room next to Hardinge's, and dreaming too, although he dreamt nonsense. Although our Curate could be deeply impressed by things that were clearly put before him, he had but little skill in brain-coinage, and he had been over the circumstances very anxiously and very often (for a man in love) before he saw anything beyond the bare facts as they had been stated to him. It was fortunate that the fear of being induced in any way to betray Mr Saunders's secret prevented him from consulting his Lydia on the whole subject (he had told her of Hardinge's dream), or perhaps he might have encountered some opposition to the action which he afterwards took. But one day in his study he remembered Hardinge's observation, that if he had been acquainted with the man of whose fate he dreamt, he might, by using a little more despatch, have been in time to give him a word of warning. Then he thought, if Hardinge had only known Ben, and mentioned the dream to him, Ben might have been in time to save his father. But Hardinge didn't know Ben, or know that Ben was near him. And at last, he thought, "But how if the dream itself had come to Ben who lay so near?" The answer of course was that Ben was engaged

dreaming of very different things, and what was to become of those things if he had dreamed, instead, of his father's death? Well, obviously, if Ben got Hardinge's dream, Hardinge might have got Ben's. And thus burst upon the Curate—when he saw how entirely the exchange would have fitted—the perception that the two visions must have got entangled, and found their way to the wrong persons.

After a little time the slow Curate got a step beyond what is mentioned above. Presuming—as he now felt certain he might—that Ben's dream was intended for Hardinge, here was Gertrude's secret deemed, by some power higher than human, to be of such importance that it was sought to be communicated to Hardinge in a dream! And yet, to the best of Norcott's belief, Hardinge had not an idea of it. It was hardly a fanciful thought that connected Gertrude's present condition with her unrequited love; the two things seemed only too much like cause and effect. Little by little a perception of the whole case came to the clergyman; and when it did come it took a fast hold. He felt certain that he saw into the whole matter; and a very unsatisfactory—nay, a very piteous—matter it appeared to be. I need hardly say that with this conviction of the existence of misunderstanding, and consequent trouble, came a desire to mitigate the grief if possible. But here he did not see his way at all. In the first place, what right had he to assume that any one else would put together the parts of this strange affair so as to arrive at the same conclusion as himself? Though he was satisfied, others would be likely to laugh away his whole array of argument. Then, secondly, if Hardinge should not be moved at all by a knowledge of the state of Gertrude's affections, a wrong would be

done to her in disclosing it. Thirdly, had he any right whatever to address Hardinge on such matters as love and marriage; and might not the young officer, without unreason, reply in a strain that would be mortifying? Lydia soon observed that something was fretting her lover, and of course she tried hard to know what it was; but here he did see his way clearly, and refused to tell his grief, lest he should betray Ben's confidence. Perhaps by calmly weighing the *pros* and *cons* he never would have come to a decision at all; but he had feelings as well as reasoning powers, and feeling brought him to a resolve. When the bad account came of Miss Fulford being unable to return home, and being ordered to Madeira for the winter, the Curate saw that if he couldn't untie the knot of his scruples he must cut it, or else shut the whole case out of his mind. He was not likely to do the latter; and so, not a bit convinced as to what was the most prudent course, he said, "nothing venture, nothing win; this may include a matter of life or death." Upon that he took up his pen to write to Hardinge, and as he did so one obstacle disappeared. Whatever the rest of the world might think about dreams, Hardinge must be the last man to dispute their significance. He might make Saunders's extraordinary dream, so strangely related to Hardinge's own, the ostensible chief subject of his letter, telling it, of course, in confidence. He could then hint at the exchange of the dreams, and hypothetically upon that hint deliver so much of his mind as could not fail to move the young officer, if he could be at all moved by thought of Gertrude. "And if he couldn't," thought Norcott, "what on earth was the dream coming to him for? Of course the sender of the dream must have expected it



to produce an effect." So a letter was written. The next thing was where to find Hardinge: he would ask Hardinge's successor, who of course would know. But he really didn't know. He thought the headquarters were somewhere in Ireland, but he wasn't sure; and if the regiment was in Ireland it would probably be broken into detachments, and it was impossible to say with which detachment Hardinge might be. The safest way, he thought, and the shortest in the long-run, would be to send the letter to the agents in London. Accordingly Norcott addressed, *To the care of Messrs Greenwood & Cox*, who duly forwarded it; but those were not the days, one must remember, of telegraphs or even of railways. Letters went about the world at what we should now call a confoundedly slow pace. Before the epistle reached the regiment, the officer to whom it was addressed had come over to England for some pheasant-shooting. He was expected to be back to duty again so soon, that it was not thought worth while to give it another journey in the mail-bag; and so it got a berth in a rack over the mess-room fireplace, where officers, who might have been out of the way at the time of the post delivery, came to look for their letters. There Hardinge found it quite a month old.

Of the effect of the letter I can judge only by what he did. He replied to Norcott, explaining the delay, expressing astonishment at the occurrence of the dreams, as also at his own obtuseness and impassibility; declaring, at the same time, his entire innocence in regard to conscious love-making. Other officers had gone on leave on his return to the regiment, so that he could not be spared again immediately; the Horse Guards could not yet decide whether they or one of

the regiments which ought to be before them on the roster should take the next turn, which made officers anxious to secure their leave; but he would manage to get away for a few days again soon, and go to Wetton to confer personally with his correspondent. Now something had happened while Norcott waited for this answer, which made him not unwilling to absent himself for a while from his curacy; and, in a day or two after reading the Lieutenant's letter, he started for Bristol, whence he took ship for, and soon reached, Waterford. Hardinge received him most kindly, insisted upon his being their guest, got him a room in barracks, and secured him a hearty welcome from all hands. Nothing could have suited the Curate better than a little experience of military life just at this time, as will be presently explained. Hardinge and he had long and frequent conferences, the result of which was, that the former insensible and over-modest youth believed the dream which he saw to be confirmed by many signs now become as clear as the daylight. He had neglected a great chance of happiness, but he would do what he yet could to retrieve matters. As soon as it became known in the regiment that Hardinge desired more leave for a very pressing reason, another officer at once offered to give up his turn to him, and the young man determined to set off a little before Christmas for Madeira, where Miss Fulford already was when he received the Curate's letter.

Now, let me mention how it came about that Mr Norcott was so willing to absent himself from Wetton. There had occurred there a woful accident, which was nothing less than a disruption of the engagement between him and Lydia. The cause was Lydia's neglect of that which Dr Watts affirms to be "a

lovely thing for youth." She had been caught with something on her tongue very similar to what was on Ananias's during the last few moments of his life. Norcott had discovered this; Lydia had tried to hide her fault by making it two; she had again been found out, and her lover had declared that, cost him what it might, he never could unite himself to a person who had been guilty of such deceit. So he renounced her. Lydia protested that the imputed lapses were but excuses for an act of perfidy; that her affections had been cruelly trifled with, her young life blighted, and that sort of thing. It wouldn't quite have suited her to take her recusant swain into a court of law, but she thought of doing it. Her brother, however, Mr Phil Tar-away, boiled over with indignation at the treatment which his sister had experienced, and said that nothing but blood could wash out the memory of it. When reminded that it was not considered quite the right thing to call out a clergyman, Mr Phil replied that, at any rate, there was nothing to prevent his horsewhipping a clergyman who had disgraced himself and his cloth, and after the infliction of that chastisement the reverent recreant might please himself about farther action. "Hang him! I'll pull his nose in his pulpit before all the congregation," said the high-spirited Phil. Norcott was warned of these terrible designs, and advised to withdraw himself for a time, which he said he should not do until Mr Phil's wrath had taken a turn, one way or other; and he seemed to take no heed to his own defence, but went about his duties just as usual. The result was, that as he was one day passing along the churchyard, at a place where it is bounded by a ha-ha fence, Mr Phil, and a friend with him, suddenly started

from the brink of the ha-ha, where they had been concealed by a monument, and, rushing out over the graves, placed themselves in his path. "Now, sir; now, you black-coated rascal," hissed Mr Phil through his teeth; "I've found you at last, and will chastise you for your infamous behaviour."

"I have not been in hiding," answered Norcott, quietly; "you might have found me when you would. What is it you propose to do?"

"What is it? why to give you the punishment your unmanly, scoundrel-like conduct to my sister has deserved. There, sir, take that, and——" Mr Phil, as he spoke, flourished a whip or cane, and aimed a terrible stroke at the Curate's shoulders, who, nothing daunted thereat, numbered his one, two, on Mr Phil's cranium in a fashion which made that young gentleman see tombstones above and behind him, and inside and outside of his head. Norcott followed this up by an excursion across the graves, driving Mr Phil back by the way he had come, until at last he knocked him into the ha-ha. After that he heard very little more of Miss Lydia and her wrongs.

"What an acute conception!" exclaimed Tom Coryton when he heard of the *rencontre*. "Why, Norcott at Cambridge could take rank with professionals in town and gown rows, and was decidedly the first man in the University with the gloves. I wish I had known of Phil's intention, I might have demonstrated to him what the consequences would be."

"My dear," said old Plummybag to Norcott, the first time they met after the *fracas*, "yew den more good by poundin' of that there young chap's haid, than yew will by praichin' to en ver a twelmonth. If he fancied tacklin' of a man that



would turn the tether chack to en, he should a-come to one ov our ministers; he oft to a-knawed that the Church, being militant, is bringled up accordin. And a very good thing too, measter, betwixt yew and me. Yew can knack gewd manners into some o' mun far sewnder than yew can talk it."

After having disposed of Mr Phil, Norcott, as I have stated, was not sorry to be off for a while, to let this disagreeable business blow over; and fortune assisted him in this, for while he was at Waterford an inhabitant of Wetton cut his throat and so turned away the minds of the other inhabitants from all previous subjects of interest; for what with looking at his house, attending his funeral, and finding out family secrets that may have led to the suicide, their intellects were wholly taken up. A few mess dinners with some pleasant fellows, and such peeps at Irish scenery as could be obtained at Christmas-time, dispersed Norcott's chagrin in a wonderful manner; and after he got back to his duties again, he often asked himself how it was that he ever fell in love with Lydia, for the simple fellow still fancied that he had acted in this matter of his own free will. But

"Men are the sport of circumstances, when  
The circumstances seem the sport of men."

Put *clever young women* for *circumstances* in the foregoing distich, and you come nearer the springs of this courtship than Mr Norcott did.

I declare that I have dwelt upon this affair of the Curate's longer perhaps than it deserved, wishing to postpone the narration of what must follow. However, I know that it must be done. Master Shallow has informed us that when you are charged with tidings, there are but two ways—either to deliver them or to conceal them: now, having

gone so far with this legend of the dreams, I am bound to follow it to the end, whether the incidents be pleasant or not.

Mrs Fulford and her daughter embarked in fine calm weather for Madeira. The skipper told them that it was beautiful times certainly if people had nothing to do but drift about and enjoy themselves, but if they wanted to get to Madeira he must have a capful of wind to take 'em there. After a day or two the wind came—plenty of it, but not fair. They had to beat about and make what little progress they could as long as seamanship could control their movements, and after that they were knocked about at the mercy of the winds and waves, for it blew something like a hurricane. In all their terror and suffering the ladies rather puzzled themselves trying to comprehend how the sailors could think it lucky that they were so well clear of the land before the gale came on. *They* would have preferred to be on shore, but when they said so, the answer was, "By jingo, ma'am! if we got on shore in such a storm as this we should never get off again. Nothing but Davy Jones for us then. No, no; we've got sea-room, and blessed glad we ought to be of it." It was nearly four weeks from the day of embarkation when the passengers were put on shore in calm and sunshine at Funchal. Poor Gertrude did not at all enjoy being run up the beach through the surf. She was carried up to the house that had been taken for them in a palanquin, being unable to walk after the cruel voyage, and put to bed, where she did not rally as it was expected she would. Her strength was very much reduced; and, in place of the pallor which had lately pervaded her sunken cheeks, there came often bright red spots, giving her an almost unearthly beauty not promis-

ing a happy issue, in an earthly sense, out of her afflictions. She was raised at length and carried into the sunshine—the delicious winter sunshine; she looked out upon the smooth, bright, glistening sea, and could hardly believe that it was the same element on which, amid mists and darkness and tempests, they had suffered so much misery—where they had been carried up to heaven, and then down again to the deep, and where their souls had melted because of the trouble.

Sometimes weak and confined to bed, at others stronger and sanguine, Gertrude Fulford was passing along the dark and troublous path whereby consumption drags its victims to their graves. Some of my readers perhaps are not aware that there is an English church at Funchal: there is one, and its surrounding burial-ground was, at the time of which I write, peopled chiefly by the young of both sexes who had been ordered out there to die—for, I fancy, very few recovered there who would not have recovered elsewhere; and now it does not seem to be so much the fashion to send patients to that graveyard, a sweet, calm resting-place, full of shrubs and flowers. The unhappy mother perceived only too surely that her child was death-stricken, and she had at times, when Gertrude rallied a little, to talk cheerfully of the return to Colkaton, which she knew one of them would never again see. This was bitter affliction; but, fortunately, the elder lady did not connect Gertrude's illness with any disturbance of the mind or feelings. Gertrude's father, it seems, had fallen a victim to the same disease, so the tendency was hereditary; what sort of battle the young girl's constitution could have maintained with it with an easy mind and without that trying sea-

voyage, we shall never know now. It was one of those rapid cases which (although, perhaps, the insidious enemy may have been surely working for a long time) declare themselves after they have become next to hopeless, and then hurry on to the catastrophe. Gertrude knew at last that she was to die; but the end did not then seem so near as it was. She lay on the sofa: she had been talking cheerfully, and at last asked to be moved back to her room; when the room was reached she had fainted. This swoon was the first of a series which continued at intervals until she at last passed from her trance into eternity, and they who watched could not tell the very time of the change, so calmly did she quit her life on earth. I have been at Madeira since that, and seen her tomb; the morning sun shines on it, and all round are leaves and blossoms. Poor girl!

Ten days after she had been laid to rest, Lieutenant Hardinge landed at Funchal. I was not there, so cannot tell how he bore to hear the tidings, but can fancy, and so no doubt can my reader, how shocked he was. I don't think he ever married. He certainly did not marry while he remained in the service; but he sold out as Lieutenant-Colonel, and I have lost sight of him since then.

Admiral Tautbrace, when he heard the story of Gertrude's death, professed to be inconsolable; but I believe, and have not scrupled to say, that his affection was set more upon Colkaton than upon its young mistress. This being so, Miss Fulford's death, over which he made so much moan, was really the means of his obtaining his heart's desire. By the terms of the late Squire Fulford's will, Colkaton now belonged to the widow, who returned to dwell there. She did not, as we have seen, think Admiral



Tautbrace an ineligible *parti*; and when, after a couple of winters in her lonely home, she heard the Admiral's proposal to pass the remainder of their lives in close company, she lent a not unwilling ear at first, and finally made him happy by accepting him. The flag never went up, but I think they were a well-assorted couple, and contributed to each other's happiness. I think, too, that the good marriages which the Misses Tautbrace made might not have come about if they had not gained a shrewd stepmother.

Now I am afraid that some who read the foregoing paragraph may think that Fortune was much too kind to a profane old sinner of a mariner. I can't help it, if Tautbrace did get better luck than he deserved; but I am not so sure, after all, about the capriciousness of the award. Tautbrace used language, and gave voice to sentiments, which would not be tolerated in the present day—indeed he could not have existed in the present day; he and his likes belonged to another period—but probably his language and his domineering style were the worst things about him. This I know, that things which we nowadays (in polite language, no doubt) permit to be freely put before our youth of either sex, would have made Tautbrace's hair stand on end. Bad as was his style, he would have burnt with terrestrial fire (not being able to command the exact flames to which he would have verbally consigned them),—he would have burned, I say, and scattered to the four winds the ashes of certain prettily told stories, now published by the hundred, full of foul ideas and bad grammar, and many of them (*probrosum dictu*) the work of young women. The man would

have cut his right hand off rather than it should do what, according to his code, was base or ungenerous. He had, as has been hinted, done the State some service; and he would have served with honour again if his superiors had only given him the chance. Neither was Tautbrace, I can assure you, half so hard and unfeeling as the sight of him in his tantrums might have led one to suppose. Let us, then, be charitable to the old sailor, "and say he died a gallant knight" (as he did, for he got the K.C.B. soon after he became a Vice-Admiral), although they would not allow his end to be "with sword in hand for England's right."\*

Tautbrace was, however, not the only person in Wetton whose heart was temporarily widowed by the early death at Madeira. Mr Ben Saunders was much shocked and pained by the untimely fate of one on whom he had been pleased to set his affection. He was very much hipped, I remember, for a long while; and he endeavoured to disperse his grief by breaking out in many objectionable ways, which, during his fancied love affair, he had avoided. Of course, Ben recovered from the blow; but he never recovered his faith in dreams, which he was afterwards fond of stigmatising as being sent by the devil to deceive fellows, and cause them to make jackasses of themselves. He returned to his old career of vulgar coxcombry and general admiration—but not for long; for he was "brought up with a round turn," as the Admiral called it, and translated into another way of life before he very well knew where he was. Miss Lydia Tarraway, after the unfortunate termination of her attack upon the Curate, became very discontented with

\* *Vide* end of Scott's 'Marmion.'

her lot. She made an attempt to go out to India to a married cousin in Bengal, but the cousin did not at all encourage the idea. After that she had serious thoughts of emigrating to some part of Australia, where young women were said to be at a great premium in the matrimonial market; but she couldn't persuade any of her friends to go with her, or to let her go by herself. She managed to go from home to pay a visit or two, but she was never followed to Wetton by any admirer. After a year or two of this sort of thing, finding that no chevalier of any means or connection was inclined to lay lance in rest for her, Lydia thought she must certainly come down to persons of lower degree; and seeing that Mr Benjamin Saunders was well to do in the world, that he was not a bad-looking fellow, and that, under her direction, he might be considerably softened down and made to play his part creditably, she exercised her fascinations upon Benjamin, and subdued him. A high match for young Saunders, many people said: a good match for Miss Tarraway, who hadn't a penny, other people said. But it was a long time in turning out a beneficial match either way. Lydia could not civilise Ben so readily as she had hoped, and Ben, after a while, wouldn't stand Lydia's extravagance in dress and folly; so they quarrelled fearfully, and more than once destroyed a breakfast-set by sending the cups and saucers at

each other's heads. After one of these general actions, Lydia had a severe attack of bronchitis; and so alarmed was Benjamin at its obstinacy that he indulged her in all her whims, and spent nearly his whole means upon her. This was not lost upon Mrs Saunders, who thenceforth became a chronic invalid, liable to an attack of dangerous illness whenever she was thwarted or vexed. It was not until three or four little Saunders's had been born to them that Lydia became more reasonable; but I believe that maternity did act favourably upon her and make her a little less selfish. She did not want for sense, and after she began to reflect and to have some idea of rectitude, she and her husband led a much happier life. She was always more or less of a scandal-monger. Ben sobered down much more quickly than she did. The coxcombry was out of him before he was eight-and-twenty, and there were white hairs in his curls at five-and-thirty, by which time his consumption of pomatum was very trifling, and his indifference about scarves and waistcoats often brought down the upbraiding of his spouse. The last time I was in Wetton (only two or three years ago) they were both alive, and not such a bad old couple.

It is hardly necessary to add to the remarks with which I commenced my tale. It is told now. Let the reader judge whether or not there is Disorder in Dreamland.

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## NEW BOOKS.

LITERATURE has been unfortunate lately in its historical records, or at least in those biographies which are the materials of its history. The bald and petty pictures of a world shrunk out of all its native breadth and space, and reduced to a brown interior, with a library table and a waste-paper basket for its central objects, which have lately been presented to us as all that our teachers understand as existence—give a sadly humiliating idea of the effect of books upon men. The reader who has been seduced into an attempt to read the big, pretentious, and meaningless volumes in which poor Mr Buckle is impaled before us like a beetle in a glass case; or that in which a wooden figure, with wires to pull it into motion, does duty for a great historian,—must have had about enough of literary biography, and may be excused if he turns with natural longing towards those lives which are real, and concerned with the positive facts of existence, and the broad open of a universe which has more in it than books. The other biography which will immediately occur to every one—the strange, melancholy, and interesting volume, in which a human soul, perhaps unique in its way, has shown itself, looking out pathetically from its loopholes of retreat upon a world not realised and barely known—does not do much to reunite the link of common nature between the world and its men of intellect. Mr Mill's pale suggestion of a life which might have been but was not, is as discouraging to look at, as is the great but melancholy picture of universal human failure with which George Eliot sometimes dismays and entrances us. Is this all that Man

at his best ever can come to? we ask ourselves; painful and gradual rectification of a few great but vague theories—an elaborate process showing how, at the end of his life, he is still employed in discussing and dubiously attempting to solve, problems which seemed a great deal less difficult at its beginning; a confused progress through a world full of phantasms, of whom he vainly despises all who are distant, and as vainly idolises those who have the luck to get within his minute inner circle. How strange, how dismal, how unreal is this life of the philosopher! and yet it was all he had for a life, and he himself spreads it out before us in forlorn vanity as something better than our humble rejoicing and sorrows. Never were books written less calculated to make us respect the place which intellect holds in the world, or indeed to prove to us how much solider, brighter, more human and more true, is the life of the ploughman or labourer than that of the sage—he who does something to smooth it if it be only a bit of swampy path under the feet of his fellow-creatures, than he who does nothing but fill the world with a demonstration of its fallacy, and holds up his own dreary self-deception for its worship. Human nature can permit a Solomon, whose regal career has embraced every experience of which either soul or sense is capable, to sing his dying song of universal disappointment, as he goes mournful into the dim land in which all labour and glory and mundane splendour are quenched and over. But the burden of Ecclesiastes is not the confused poverty of failure, but a lofty despair. In it the soul appears to us, not too feeble to con-

tend with the delusions and complexities that meet it in its path, but too great to be satisfied with those elements of existence from which it constantly aspires to something higher, a world not yet revealed. The one saddens but elevates nature; the other depresses and confuses—just as “all is failure” has a different meaning from “all is vanity.” And if this mysterious life which we spend between two unknowns—this existence which comes we know not whence, and goes we know not whither—is to be looked at in its noblest light, we are disposed to turn rather to the experiences of those who have lived for its practical realities, than those who have lived for its intellectual possibilities, its supposed higher part; to the lives of soldiers, sailors, common men and women, rather than to those of philosophers and thinkers. 'Tis pity, but according to all recent experiences 'tis true.

Here are, however, before us some books which would seem to prove that literature and intellect are less incompatible with the broader and simpler experiences of humanity than recent information would make us believe. These reconciling books, mediators, as it were, between outrageous Mind and affronted humanity, proceed from two classes somewhat despised in the present day—to wit, women and Frenchmen. Of all women, however, who have ventured into the world of letters,\* Mrs Somerville is perhaps the one who had least occasion to recall the disabilities of her sex. She has been universally allowed to be great, and admitted within the circle of the immortals without grudging or modification of applause. Perhaps this is ex-

plainable by the fact, that whereas genius—the only, or almost the only, ground on which women ever have any claim to distinction—is a disputable quality, often not recognised at once, sometimes not recognised at all till its possessor has passed out of hearing of human criticism, great knowledge is a positive and indisputable possession upon which doubt cannot be thrown, any more than doubt can be thrown on the possession of money or rank, or any other tangible ground of elevation. Mrs Somerville, apart from all original qualities of her mind, possessed this wealth of knowledge to a degree which made it unquestionable, and gave her a rightful claim upon the attention which mere genius rarely gives; therefore her title to reputation has never been questioned, neither has any one ventured to say of her that what she did was very good for a woman. Her place has been in the very front rank of science for years, one might almost say for generations; and though not one perhaps in a million of her country-people could fully understand her works, yet everybody has acknowledged her eminence, the ignorant and the wise alike—the ignorant naturally following in the steps of the wise, and accepting their judgment. The modest book which has just been given to the world, containing this remarkable woman's simple account of herself, has therefore an excellent right to a hearing; and if Mrs Somerville does not go a long way to reconcile the reader to intellectual persons and pursuits, we do not know anything that can. After Messrs Buckle, Grote, &c., it is refreshing beyond measure to come face to face with a life so much in harmony with life and

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\* Personal Recollections from Early Life to Old Age of Mary Somerville. With Selections from her Correspondence. By her daughter, Martha Somerville. London: J. Murray. 1873.



nature—so simple, genuine, and true.

We will not pretend that Mrs Somerville's autobiography bears with it anything of the strained and painful interest which belongs to Mr Mill's; but it might almost have been written in direct opposition to the self-portraiture of the philosopher. No contrast could be more marked and striking. How much the natural contrast between man and woman has to do with this difference, we shall not attempt to define; for to claim for women generally so much higher a degree of simplicity, humility, and unconsciousness of self, would be rash, to say the least, and scarcely justifiable by fact and evidence. It is, however, curious to recognise the distinction between these two very remarkable persons, and the manner in which they reveal themselves to the world; a difference which is fundamental—of kind, not of degree—and which is apparent in the very first pose of each figure against its characteristic background. Mr Mill, it is true, gives us to understand that he was, in his youth, quite unaware of the extraordinary difference between his own training and acquirements and those of his contemporaries; but, notwithstanding this statement, he treats himself from the beginning, perhaps involuntarily, as something of a wonder, a man occupying a different position from that of other men, and free from the restraints to which they are naturally subjected. This is done not ostentatiously, nor with any of that simple enthusiasm of self-love and vanity which is sufficiently familiar to us in the self-revelations of men of genius, but mildly and steadfastly, as a truth of the higher order which it would not become any one to gainsay. This is

the man's view of his own position, and we cannot say that it was not justified by fact, for his career and position were entirely abnormal. The woman, however, takes a totally different view of the subject. She is aware from the outset, and painfully aware, that she is not as others; but the wonder in her transparent mind is not so much that she should be so superior, as that others should not do the same as she. The man stands on his elevation, feeling its loftiness to his very heart, and concludes that it is the duty of one so highly elevated to keep himself as much as possible from contact with the base multitude below. The woman looks down, smiling, from hers, and says, "Come up; it is nothing so very great; and how easy to climb, if you will but take a little trouble!" Let us add that the self-assumption is infinitely more imposing to the general mind, and that even on the individual who asserts himself thus loftily, the assertion has an influence which it would be difficult to exaggerate, and gives him a real sensation of greatness which the humbler soul can never receive from without. The other position, however, has its compensating advantages, and so has its charm to beholders; and so long as human nature remains as it is, the charm of simplicity, the absence of self-consciousness, will call forth a sympathy more warm than mere admiration. There are other particulars in which Mrs Somerville's autobiography will recall that of Mill to the reader in the amusing completeness of its contrast. The one was trained for his work by the most elaborate preparation perhaps ever given to any hapless human creature. Before it could be well ascertained whether he had any mind at all, he had begun to be cultivated like a piece of

garden ground, the natural qualities of which do not matter much to the gardener, who knows that he can modify its soil to his will, and make it produce what pleases him. This must have been the elder Mill's theory of the intellect, we presume; for nothing but a mere arbitrary election could have determined his choice at three years old of the object of his tremendous training, the small undeveloped being, whom by mere exercise of omnipotent will he made into a philosopher. Very different was the beginning of the other philosopher. The training of this little maiden on the shores of Fife—bookless, companionless, untaught, whose only duty was to *shew* her seam, whose only pleasure was the shore and the garden, who did not know what the strange word algebra meant, when her eager young soul was vaguely seeking its first beginnings of knowledge—was, one would suppose, as unlikely to produce a great mathematician as any training could be. Yet the wild growth and self-culture of the one seems to have succeeded in its special field quite as well as the elaborate educational processes to which the other was subjected, and certainly is infinitely more interesting and charming to the imagination. It was even, we cannot but think, more successful; for we miss in it that curious struggle which is apparent throughout all the earlier portion of Mill's life, between the mind which nature gave him and that which his father and the stern reign of circumstances created in him—the only part of his mental experience in which he seems destitute of self-consciousness; for this struggle does not appear, though he felt it vaguely, to have been intelligible to himself. Had he been left to the development of nature, in all probability the result would have been a very different man.

We must not, however, allow the piquancy of the contrast to carry us too far, and here leave Mr Mill and his strange self-record. Mary Fairfax, the most learned woman of her time, was born in December 1780, in the manse of Jedburgh, the house of her mother's sister, and of her future husband. She died in 1872, missing only eight years of the century, and is thus almost as remarkable for the long duration of her life as for its many acquirements. Nothing could well be more unlike than the Scotland of her youth and that of ours. Edinburgh was distant a long journey of many days' duration from London; and even Burntisland, the humble little place in which her early life was spent, was separated from Edinburgh by a two hours' voyage in a sailing boat, often made at peril of life. The father of the little girl, who grew like a flower, as wild as any primrose and as sweet, was a naval officer, finally Sir William Fairfax, and an admiral; her mother, a kind domestic woman, who taught her child to sew and to read the Bible, and had no faith in any further education. Their house was an old-fashioned Scotch house with a large garden, a little green descending to the rocks and the sea, abundance of fruit and vegetables, and old-fashioned flowers—the flowers finer than was usual, for the sailor-father was a florist, and brought home rare bulbs and seeds. "My mother prided herself on her moss-roses," as did many a mother in those old tranquil days when moss-roses were.

How clear the past, far enough off, yet not so distant as that of Mary Fairfax, rises before us as we read! Mary learnt her "questions"—to wit, the Shorter Catechism, and did not love them; she read the 'Arabian Nights,' the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and 'Robinson Crusoe.'



She gathered the fruit for the jam, and shelled the peas; she sewed her sampler, "working the alphabet from A to Z, as well as the ten numbers, on canvas;" in short, she was trained, as many a Scotch girl for generations after her was trained, in the homeliest narrow round of duties; yet with so much movement of intelligence in the minds around her, not more technically "educated" than her own, but full of mother-wit and independent original thought, as to neutralise the crushing effect of that narrowness. Her amusements were of a less ordinary kind. It must be added that she was the only child in the house, her brother being absent at school, and in consequence very lonely.

"I was no longer amused in the garden, but wandered about the country. When the tide was out I spent hours on the sands, looking at the star-fish and sea-urchins, or watching the children digging for sand-eels, cockles, and the spouting razor-fish. I made a collection of shells, such as were cast ashore, some so small that they appeared like white specks in patches of black sand. There was a small pier on the sands for shipping limestone brought from the coal-mines inland. I was astonished to see the surface of those blocks of stone covered with beautiful impressions of what seemed to be leaves; how they got there I could not imagine, but I picked up the broken bits, and even large pieces, and brought them to my repository. I knew the eggs of many birds, and made a collection of them. . . . In the rocks at the end of our garden there was a shingly opening in which we used to bathe, and where at low tide I frequently waded among masses of rock covered with sea-weeds. With the exception of dulse and tangle, I knew the names of none, though I was well acquainted with and admired the beautiful plants. I also watched the crabs, live shells, jelly-fish, and various marine animals, all of which were objects of curiosity and amusement to me in my lonely life. . . . When the bad

weather began I did not know what to do with myself. Fortunately we had a small collection of books, among which I found Shakespeare, and read it at every moment I could spare."

We wonder if this was such a bad education after all—so much worse than that which we have progressed to, than that which we may progress to in the future? Or whether those thoughtful workings of little heads, those musings not communicable, the silent, self-development of untaught but not unlearning childhood, have not something in them as good or better than direct instruction? The little girl had much to struggle against, however, in the shape of sewing, then considered the first duty of woman. "I wonder you let Mary waste her time in reading; she never *shows* more than if she were a man," was the reproach of a rigid aunt to the gentler mother; but as Mary soon after made a shirt as a test of her skill, and did it well, these criticisms, we trust, relaxed in severity. Mrs Chapone's 'Letters to Young Women' were in the home library, and she dutifully betook herself to the course of study recommended in that decorous manual. She learned the use of the globes at the same time, and would study the stars for hours at the window of her bedroom when the simple household was asleep. A little later, when the girl had entered her teens, "I taught myself Latin enough from such books as we had to read Cæsar's 'Commentaries.' Thus her lonely youth went on, happy enough we may be sure, with little episodes of Edinburgh, the dancing-school, and a more mundane existence. It was at a Burntisland tea-party that the first beginnings of the study of her life dawned upon her. While the older ladies played cards, a younger one present invited Mary Fairfax to go and see some fancy-work she

was doing. The patterns for this fancy-work were in an illustrated book of fashions—nothing more weighty. “At the end of the page I read what appeared to me to be simply an arithmetical question; but, on turning the page, I was surprised to see strange-looking lines mixed with letters—chiefly X’s and Y’s—and asked, ‘What is that?’ ‘Oh,’ said Miss Ogilvie, ‘it is a kind of arithmetic; they call it Algebra, but I can tell you nothing about it.’” Let no one henceforward despise the humble magazine of the *Mode*. In this undignified way the young student became aware of a science unknown, which she was soon to master. She went home determined to “look if any of our books could tell me what was meant by Algebra.” The nearest approach to it was a book on navigation, which the girl set to work on instantly, and from which she derived, she tells us, “a dim view of several subjects which were useful to me afterwards,” but which left her unsatisfied and uninformed as to that new language of X’s and Y’s of which her eager mind had had one tantalising glimpse.

“The rest of the summer,” she adds, “I spent in playing on the piano, and learning Greek enough to read Xenophon and part of Herodotus,” an acquirement caught up by the way like a flower on the roadside. How her drawing-master (no less a person than the painter Nasmyth) recommended Euclid as the foundation of perspective as well as of other science; how the pretty shy girl felt that to “go to a bookseller and ask for Euclid would be impossible!” and how finally she coaxed her brother’s tutor, “a simple good-natured kind of man,” to make this alarming purchase for her,—she goes on to tell with the most charming modest pleasure in the story of these early difficulties. How hap-

py she was over this acquisition! When all the household affairs were over, and her sewing got through—and as she had to make all her own clothes, *even ball-dresses*, this sewing must have been no inconsiderable item—Mary sat up in her room near the window where ignorant but eager she had watched the stars, and pored over her treasure far into the night; until there came to be complaints on the immoderate use of candles, and orders were issued that her light should be taken away. “I had, however, already gone through the six books of Euclid, and now I was thrown on my memory, which I exercised by beginning at the first book and demonstrating a certain number of problems every night till I could nearly go through the whole.” At a later period she changed her habits so far as to transfer these hours of abstruse study to the morning, when, she tells us, “I rose at daybreak, and after dressing wrapt myself in a blanket from my bed on account of the excessive cold—having no fire at that hour—and read algebra or the classics till breakfast-time.” Nor had this career of labour and self-devotion any gentle stimulus of approbation, or that proud and pleased wonder with which a tender household so often regards the studiousness of one of its members. Of Mary’s drawings the Fairfaxes were proud, but they were shocked by the severer studies. “We must put a stop to this or we shall have Mary in a strait-jacket one of these days,” said her sailor-father, troubled by his prodigy; and her mother took away her candle! But nothing seems to have daunted the young student. She had diversions too, enough to keep a mind of twenty cheery, in spite of any such little obstacles in its way, and danced and flirted, and received her maiden’s due of admiration and



gentle homage such as no woman despises. We know nothing prettier, indeed, than the brief paragraphs in which this old, old philosopher, a member of all the learned societies in Europe, bearing such a weight of years and honours as few have had the chance of, tells how the pretty Scotch girl enjoyed herself far off in the remote sweet days of her youth in that friendly old-fashioned Edinburgh which existed at the beginning of this century. The old woman tells her tale with a half-amused indulgent smile, almost caressing, half-shaking her grey locks at, that sprightly pretty Mary, who somehow in a sweet confusion of identity is, and yet is not, herself. One feels as if she must have doubted now and then for a moment which Mary she was, the young or the old.

In due time she married—not, it would appear, very happily; though indeed, after a woman has been married for a century or so to a second husband, it is but natural that she should have blurred over the memory of the first, and give him but a shadowy place in her recollection. For one thing, however, he had “a very low opinion of the capacity of my sex,” and himself cared nothing for science; and it was only after his death, in the freedom of her widowhood, emancipated from all the bonds of obedience which restrain a girl, that she was able to give herself freely to the studies she loved, and for the first time to have some real help in pursuing them. Five years after the death of her first husband she married the second, her cousin Dr Somerville, the genial and sympathetic companion of the rest of her life, and from this time was neither hampered nor discouraged in her further career. She tells, however, with a mixture of fun and indignation, how much wrath and preju-

dice her unusual studies called forth. During her widowhood, for instance, she had a lover who sent her a volume of sermons, “with a page turned down at a sermon on the duties of a wife!” and when her engagement to her cousin became known, one of his sisters wrote to her expressing a hope that “I would give up my foolish manner of life and studies, and make a respectable and useful wife!” When she became Mrs Somerville, however, all these little pricks of opposition came to an end, and her happy and sunshiny career, full of pleasant change and bright society, contains no longer anything but the records of success which, though very pleasant to hear of, are not so interesting as the foregoing struggle. Granted that the struggle of self-instruction does not end in superficial and limited knowledge, and there is no comparison between the interest of it and that of more easily acquired education—in Mrs Somerville's case it is evident this frequent result was avoided, and her attainments were as solid and well founded as they were brilliant; and no romance could be more seductive than the story of her philosophical training, so little attractive to human nature when attained in more legitimate and easy ways.

We will not attempt to follow her through her successes: as we have already said, they were more complete and unquestionable than those of any other modern woman. They made no change in her, notwithstanding her frank and unaffected pleasure in them. She remained the same simple, natural, genial, and domestic soul, through all the triumphs of a scientific career which seems to have had no failures in it,—a good housekeeper, and the carefullest of mothers, though a renowned *savante*—if it is necessary to give a feminine turn to the word

—and at the same time a pretty woman, fond of society and enjoying it fully. By natural right a scientific woman ought to be ugly, but Mrs Somerville did not answer to the ideal in this point. She remained (and this goes to our national heart) as Scotch as when she danced in the Edinburgh Assembly Rooms, or wandered about the Binn at Burntisland. “In speaking, she had a very decided but pleasant Scotch accent, and when aroused and excited would often unconsciously use not only native idioms, but quaint old Scotch words.” She was doubtful about her own style in writing, saying that “she was only a self-taught, uneducated Scotch-woman, and feared to use Scotch idioms inadvertently.” Is there any of her countrymen so disloyal as not after this to love the name of Mary Somerville? He can have no right in that case to call himself a kindly Scot.

Mrs Somerville lived till she was ninety-three, an almost incredible age, spending the latter part of her life in Italy, among the most beautiful scenes in the world. In this long sweet lingering twilight of existence she continued to work and study, sometimes on a terrace by the sea at loveliest Sorrento, with Naples and its bay, and all the islands of the blessed there, before her eyes; sometimes at Spezia, and for a long time at Florence. Here are two extracts from the last pages of her simple and touching history, in which there appears such a tranquil *résumé* of life, and such a cheerful-solemn anticipation of the hereafter, as we should all be glad to have in the evening of our days, even if not half so prolonged as hers.

“I have lately entered my eighty-ninth year, grateful to God for the innumerable blessings He has bestowed on me and my children; at peace with all the earth, and I trust I may be at

peace with my Maker when my last hour comes, which cannot now be far distant.

“Although I have been tried by many severe afflictions, my life upon the whole has been happy. In my youth I had to contend with prejudice and illiberality; yet I was of a quiet temper and easy to live with, and I never interfered with or pried into other people’s affairs. However, if irritated by what I considered unjust criticism or interference with myself, or anyone I loved, I could resent it fiercely. I was not good at argument; I was apt to lose my temper; but I never bore ill-will to any one, or forgot the manners of a gentlewoman, however angry I may have been at the time. But I must say that no one ever met with such kindness as I have done. I never had an enemy. I have never been of a melancholy disposition; though depressed sometimes by circumstances I always rallied again; and although I seldom laugh, I can laugh heartily at wit or on fit occasion. The short time I have to live naturally occupies my thoughts. In the blessed hope of meeting again with my beloved children, and those who were and are dear to me on earth, I think of death with composure and perfect confidence in the mercy of God. Yet to me, who am afraid to sleep alone on a stormy night, or even to sleep comfortably any night unless some one is near, it is a fearful thought that my spirit must enter that new state of existence quite alone. We are told of the infinite glories of that state, and I believe in them, though it is incomprehensible to us; but as I do comprehend in some degree, at least, the exquisite loveliness of the visible world, I confess I shall be sorry to leave it. I shall regret the sky, the sea, with all the changes of their colouring; the earth with its verdure and flowers; but far more shall I grieve to leave animals who have followed our steps affectionately for years, without knowing for certain their ultimate fate, though I firmly believe that the living principle is never extinguished. . . .

“The Blue Peter has been long flying at my foremast” (she adds, three years later), “and now that I am in my ninety-second year, I must soon expect the signal for sailing. It is a solemn



voyage, but it does not disturb my tranquillity. Deeply sensible of my utter unworthiness, and profoundly grateful for the innumerable blessings I have received, I trust in the infinite mercy of my Almighty Creator. I have every reason to be thankful that my intellect is still unimpaired; and although my strength is weakness, my daughters support my tottering steps, and by incessant care and help make the infirmities of age so light to me that I am perfectly happy."

These are the last words of Mary Somerville's recollections. She got her signal of sailing privately, as it sometimes comes to the favourites of heaven. He gives it to His beloved sleeping. A worthy life could not have had a more perfect conclusion.

We promised the reader to reconcile him to the literary craft by the books at present on our table. We shall do more—we will make his heart swell with sympathy over one of the most tender and touching of love tales. The '*Journal et Correspondance de André-Marie Ampère*'\* is one of those books which, perhaps, it is half profane to publish, but which, once published, become to every sympathetic reader not books, but incidents and persons he has known as part of his own recollections. It is of the *genre* of the '*Recit d'une Sœur*,' and probably but for the extraordinary success of that work, would never have seen the light; but it is much shorter, more reticent and modest in its revelations, and has much more dramatic unity in its brief and complete record of one episode in a great and worthy life. The eminent mathematician and philosopher does not appear to us as does the woman whose pure and simple career we have just discussed, in the course of his training, or the development of his genius. We see incidentally how he struggled up to the first step in

the ladder of reputation, but this struggle is so entirely subordinate to a dearer object that it interests us in a secondary degree; for Ampère worked not in the first place for knowledge, like Mary Somerville, nor for fame and advancement, like many another—but for Julie; his wife, and his child, and the means of supporting them, and enjoying their tender society, were his inspiration. To make sure of a little home in Lyons, where he could give his lessons, and study the *chimie*, which ruined *ses pantalons* and burnt holes in his waistcoats, to Julie's despair—with her by his side and their boy—was the motive which pushed him to ever greater and greater efforts, which impelled his brain to ceaseless work, and kept his hands black (also to Julie's despair) with burns and staining acids. Let us allow that to pursue science for the love of science is perhaps a nobler motive. The men who go furthest in all sublime paths of learning are perhaps—though we do not affirm it—men who have no Julie. When Andrea del Sarto, musing in Mr Browning's beautiful poem upon the higher elevation of Rafael and Agnolo, reflects, "but then they had no wife," it is like enough that the excuse for his own shortcoming was valid. But here again a compensating human sentiment comes in. The love of art or of science is grand but cold, and not comprehensible to all of us; but the love of the little home, the dependent family, the child, the woman, how deeply comprehensible they are! Therefore the struggle of André Ampère will go to many a heart which has little sympathy with science—and it is, though an episode in the history of science, in itself pure poetry, the oldest and most everlasting of all arts.

\* *Journal et Correspondance de André-Marie Ampère.* Hetzler & Cie., Paris.

It forms but one chapter in a long life — such an episode as a man might half forget, looking back to it in the long blank of years after, seeing himself as in a dream, and wondering if it could ever have been true; or might keep in his heart and memory, hidden far from common sight, unknown to others, yet his most dear and precious possession. We do not know in which of these ways the celebrated Ampère, in the long ages after, when he had won everything that fame had to give, remembered the wife of his youth: but in the days before he was great, in the beginning of his career, his heart was so full of her that there was room for little else; and this is the story of that brief but agitated time.

The lady who has arranged the letters, linking them together with a thread of remark and description not always in good taste, and seldom necessary, prefaces the collection with an extract from Sainte-Beuve's "portrait" of Ampère, in which the great critic describes how, searching among his hero's papers, "*blasonnées de figures algébriques*," for materials for his work, he found a page of paper yellow with time, and more than usually scratched with mathematical symbols, on which the young man had evidently begun to scribble some record of his youthful feelings — describing how his studies and books had become distasteful to him all at once, and his heart had demanded something more than science or literature. "One day, walking at sunset along the bank of a solitary stream," the MS. goes on — then ends abruptly, leaving no further information. "What did he see on the banks of this stream?" says Sainte-Beuve. "Another folio full of memorials leaves us in no doubt on this subject, and, under the title *Amorum*, carries on

day by day the entire history of his feelings, of his love and marriage, up to the death of the object of his affections. Who could believe it? or rather, when one thinks a little, why should it not have been so? The philosopher whom we have seen full of thoughts and wrinkles, and who appeared to have lived only in the world of figures, was in his day a vigorous youth; he loved and was loved again; but all this has passed with the years, has been covered up and forgotten: perhaps it would have astonished himself even, had he found, in searching for some geometrical paper, this journal of his heart, this book of *Amorum*, long buried and forgotten."

Not long ago it was our fate to have in our hands the journal of another illustrious Frenchman, a brilliant and caustic spirit, showing little trace of the tender sentimentality of youth, in his conversation and social aspect at least. One of the little volumes had a heading, "writ large," to every page, often underlined in red ink to make it more emphatic. This heading was "BONHEUR." It contained the narrative of his wedding tour. We leave the reader to guess what were the feelings of the wife to whom this volume, with its eloquent and often-repeated heading, came as an inheritance thirty years or more after, when the writer was dead. But poor Ampère's *Amorum* was no poetical preface to a long and happy existence. It forms but a short episode, dramatically perfect and complete, embracing about five years only of a prolonged life.

André-Marie Ampère was the son of a respectable merchant in Lyons who was guillotined under the Revolution. The boy had already shown signs of the ability afterwards so fully proved and acknowledged: "*quant à mon fils, il n'y a rien que je n'attende de lui*," his



father wrote in a fine and touching letter of farewell addressed to his family a few hours before his execution. Close to Polémieux, the little property which belonged to the Widow Ampère, was the village of Saint-Germain-au-Mont-d'or, where, in a simple little country house, lived, during the summer, a family called Carron, *bourgeois* like the other. The second daughter, Julie, was a golden-haired girl with blue eyes, in which André read "the serenity of an angelic soul." The young man himself lived in Lyons, giving lessons and studying with all his heart. "In winter he rose long before day, at four o'clock, and leaving his room, climbed up the long stairs to a house on the fifth story in the Place du Cordeliers, to join a group of comrades eager like himself to read and know." Every Saturday he took his way to Polémieux, after the wont of many a laborious lad, to spend Sunday at home. It is to be supposed that the pleasant country road led him through Saint-Germain, where stood the little *campagne*—homely white house with its garden—where Julie folded up the linen which had been hung out to dry, and gathered strawberries, and filled the boy-student's soul with dreams. Here is the beginning of the *Amorum*—the story of this pure and gentle love :—

## AMORUM.

1796.

"Sunday, 10th April.—I saw her for the first time.

"Saturday, 10th August.—I went to her house, when they lent me the 'Novelli Morali di Soavi.'

"Saturday, 3d September.—I took back the 'Novelli;' they gave me my choice in their library. I took 'Madame Deshouliers.' I was alone with her for a minute.

"Sunday, 4th September.—I walked home with the two sisters after mass.

I took back the first volume of Bernardin. She told me that she would be alone; her mother and sister were to leave on Wednesday.

"Friday, 9th September.—I went, but found only Elise" (poor boy!)

Thus the journal goes on. On Saturday the 17th September he "begins to open my heart." On the following Monday he completes his declaration, bringing back "feeble hopes, and an order not to go back before the return of her mother." After this, several occasions occur in which he met her "without daring to speak to her." Sometimes Julie is unkind, and bids him come not so often. "Elle me rembourra bien" is another complaint. But, nevertheless, progress is made. There are few protestations, which were unnecessary in Ampère's brief memoranda, and none of the sentimental *épanchements du cœur* which make us half despise Madame Craven's too eloquent hero. There is, however, nothing but *her*. "I ate a cherry which she had dropped: I kissed a rose which she had touched," the lad says in the following June. "When we were walking, I twice gave her my hand to cross a stile. Her mother made a place for me on the bench between her and Julie. As we returned, I said to her that I had scarcely ever passed so happy a day, but that it was not the sight of nature that had most charmed me. She talked to me with grace and kindness." Another time "she deigned to hold a long conversation" with the happy youth. It was not, however, till three years after their first meeting that the shy Julie and her careful parents allowed themselves to be persuaded to accord her to her eager lover. He was only twenty-three or twenty-four, so that there was not much time lost after all. The young couple began their married life humbly in the Rue Mercier in

Lyons, with, however, the kindly refuge of the two village houses behind them, especially that of Julie's mother, now a widow. They were poor, but they were happy. André's pupils, however, did not afford a sure maintenance for the little family when increased by the child who was in his turn to make himself well known to the world—the antiquarian-historian, Jean Jacques Ampère; and André decided to accept an appointment in Bourg, twelve leagues off (they talk of this as if it had been thousands of miles away), where his income was fixed at the modest sum of two thousand and six francs—about eighty pounds—which he did his best to increase by means of private pupils, hoping always to bring himself into notice, and to obtain a post in the Lycée which was to be established at Lyons. Julie, whose health never seems to have been re-established after the birth of her child, was not allowed by her doctor to accompany her husband; and for the two years following André lived in a state of exile from all he loved best, making hurried visits in the holidays to his wife and child; living the most laborious and frugal life away from them, and thinking of them night and day. All his efforts, all his labours and hopes, are directed to the one point of getting this much-longed-for appointment in Lyons, which would restore him to Julie and her family, and his own. Our space will permit us to quote only a few of the ceaseless letters which the young mathematician, in the intervals of his perpetual lessons, calculations, and chemical experiments, found opportunity to write to his poor young wife, sick and ailing, but always hopeful, in the gloomy little house in the Rue Mercier. Here is one which shows the young *savant* in the middle of his work:—

“Seven years ago I proposed to myself a problem of my own invention which I could not solve by direct means, but to which by chance I found a solution which I saw was right without being able to demonstrate it. This has often returned to my mind, and twenty times have I sought, without finding, the direct solution of my problem. A few days since my idea took once more possession of me, and at last, I know not how, I have succeeded in grasping it, along with a theory of curious and novel ideas upon the theory of probabilities. As I believe that there are few mathematicians in France who will solve this problem in a shorter time, I do not doubt that its publication in a pamphlet of twenty pages would be a good way of attaining to a mathematical chair. I will finish the day after to-morrow this little essay of pure algebra, in which there is no need of figures; but will keep it to revise and correct it until next week, when I will send it to you by Pochon, with the checked waistcoat, the woollen stockings, and the six louis of which I have spoken. As soon as the MS. arrives at Lyons it must be printed. . . . The six louis for this month and the seven for next must be used for this, and I shall be certain of the place at Lyons. Perhaps we may sell some copies, but first of all I think many must be given to the learned in Paris.

“I trouble you with my commissions, but it will not last long. The future offers us a happy perspective; health for you, a good place at Lyons, our delightful child, and the still sweeter thought that you love me always.”

Here is another, in which the love comes uppermost, the young philosopher having *ses vacances*, and giving himself up entirely to thoughts of Julie:—

“Bourg, Wednesday,  
“Eleven o'clock morning.

“How I sigh for the moment which shall bring us together again! Oh, when, when will the holidays come!

“Four o'clock.

“This exclamation had just come from my lips when I was seized with a sudden fancy which you will think odd. I made up my mind to go back with



your packet of letters to the field behind the hospital, where I had gone to read them before my journey to Lyons with so much pleasure. I meant to renew there the gentle recollections of which I made provision before, and I have gathered sweeter still for another time. How sweet your letters are! One must have a mind like yours to write things which go thus to the heart, without design or study. I remained till two o'clock seated under a tree, with a meadow at my right hand, the river to the left and in front of me, the buildings of the hospital behind. You may suppose that I had taken the precaution before thus indulging myself to leave word at Madame Beauregard's that I should not dine there to-day. She supposes I have gone out to dinner; but as I had breakfasted well, I was all the better for having no dinner but love. At two I felt so calm and easy in mind, in place of the weariness that oppressed me this morning, that I took the fancy of walking and botanising. . . . I write all sorts of nonsense to you, to give you an idea of the state of my mind. It is certain that my long walk, these dear recollections, the success of my experiments and of my lessons, have singularly tranquillised the mind which was so much excited eight days ago."

"Here is a list of my daily occupations," he writes at a later period. "M. Clere works with me from six o'clock in the morning till ten; Gripier from half-past eleven to one. In the afternoon, from three to four, I give my lessons in physics; the rest of my time is passed in thinking of Julie, and of the works I am meditating. During the weekly holiday (or more exactly, for these were the days of the Revolution, *la vacance du décadi*) M. Clere makes experiments in chemistry along with me. Yesterday I did not sup till ten, when I was thoroughly wearied with the exertion and broken in spirit, having broken my materials in the mortar, carried coals, and blown the fire for twelve or thirteen hours, but happy to have sometimes succeeded. Ah, if all this would but bring me to the Lycée I should be satisfied, and should no longer fear the necessity of living long separate from Julie, unable to supply her with things necessary for her,

so often deprived as she has been of a thousand indispensable matters. . . . I have made an arrangement with Perrin, by which, counting from to-day, she will furnish me with breakfast daily for three francs a-month (!) Dear Julie, consult whatever doctor you like, but in no case neglect your health. Ah, if I only knew how to cure you by returning to Lyons! for that I would give up the Ecole Centrale and everything else. . . . At Easter, my darling, at Easter, I shall have some days of happiness at least!"

The answers sent by the young wife to these letters are more graceful and sprightly in style, and not less tender and simple. She pities her *pauvre ami*, who has nothing but physics and chemistry to console him. "You go on making those villanous drugs," she cries, half smiling, half in dismay; "and your poor book is no nearer finished than ever." She is anxious and troubled about his "cloth trousers," which she bids him send her, lest the rats should eat them; and tells him to take care of his waistcoats and breeches, and to wear the coarse aprons with strings which she sends him. Many and often repeated are her counsels about his personal appearance. "I beg of you not to unrip the lining of your sleeves," she says; "take care to have your cravats clean, to be *bien chaussé*; take care of your trousers, your waistcoats, your stockings." After a little quarrel he has had with his landlady on going to dinner with hands stained black with some acid, she addresses him with mingled vexation and sympathy. "I approve your leaving Madame Beauregard after her politeness," she says; "but I wish this would make you a little more careful of your person, for many may think within themselves what she has the rudeness to say. If you pay any visits, do try to have the aspect of a respectable man, to please your poor wife, who has not

too many pleasures." Nor does Julie confine herself to such small matters. She gives him counsel about the management of his affairs, in which the philosopher is not very clear; and arranges, weak and suffering as she is, about his printing, and the distribution and correction of his pamphlet. But her health keeps her from him, and keeps him in a perpetual anxiety, which she thus endeavours to calm down:—

"Mon pauvre ami, it is not the first time that you have made me smile, bidding me promise you to be ill no more. Ah, health is so precious that if I possessed wealth I would sacrifice it all to obtain that blessing. But we must submit, hope in the future, and have patience. Have patience, also, mon fils, and do not stupefy yourself with this as you do with your calculations; for how to be cured is not a problem which can be solved, and it is vain to attempt it if the Master of our being wills that it should be otherwise. We must learn to bear these evils, and do what we can not to think too much of them." "How willingly," she adds later, "would I spend your money that you might have a wife like others who could enjoy with you and our little one so many little pleasures which bad health poisons! Oh yes, it is sad indeed to be always an object of anxiety to one's own people—to you, mon pauvre ami, who see me suffering, weary, sometimes unjust. God wills it so—we must submit. I should have been too happy had He left me my strength. A good husband, a delightful child, the best of mothers, loved and cherished by all my family, would not this have been too much happiness? I feel it, for, notwithstanding my condition, I am more attached to life than ever: it is because I love you more, and my child also, and I am sure that both of you have need of me to be happy. But let us change the subject, for this overcomes me; you will feel, like me, your heart bleed as you read."

Poor Julie! poor young husband!—the pamphlet, with its unique calculation (*considérations sur la théorie mathématique du feu*), the

anxious efforts of every kind, brilliant lectures, successful experiments, problems solved, succeeded to the height of his hopes. In the spring of 1803 he had at last certainty of his appointment at the newly-formed Lycée of Lyons. On the 17th April he came home *pour ne plus quitter Julie*—pathetic words! for Julie was on the eve of leaving him, and for ever. On the 5th July he gave, poor soul, his first lesson in Lyons; but the day which should have been the climax of happiness to him calls forth not a word of pleasure. He went to his much-desired tribune from the deathbed of his wife. On the 13th of July, after a pitiful record of medicines administered and changed, which is all his journal has come to, there ensues a sudden deadly lull. "*Multa flagella peccatoris sperantam autem in Domino misericordia circumdabit,*" he cries twice over out of the depths. "Wilt Thou take from me all happiness on this earth? Thou hast it in Thy hands, O my God. I hope in Thee, O my God. I submit to Thy sentence, whatever it may be; but I should have preferred to die. O Lord God of mercy, reunite me in heaven to her whom Thou hast permitted me to love on earth."

Julie was dead.

After this the hapless life pauses, comes to a dead stop, as lives do when struck with those blows which slay only the heart, not the body. He strayed away from the Lycée which he had longed and prayed for, but which was now a misery to him, and after a while got to Paris, to fame, to a reputation more than national, and a place among the first rank of French philosophers. But the chapter of *Amorum* was closed for ever. In after-years the passion of paternal love, which belongs so specially to the French character, made him happy in his absolute devotion to his son; but



that one brief, almost momentary, episode of a passion more absorbing still, got buried in silence and obscurity, until the time came when poor André Ampère died, one of the most distinguished of *savants*, and the hand of genius stirred those ashes to make a record of his life. Strange power of human words! With the old letters out of the silken portfolio which Julie worked for him, this whole little circle reappears as living as if in France letters were still dated in Germinal and Messidor—not Ampère and Julie only, but the two mothers, the sisters, the old servants, and all that homely life over which their refined and graceful tongue throws a charm and elegance which does not always appear in translation or in reality. Besides the melancholy beauty of the story, it is a revelation of apparently cultivated intelligence and elevated feeling such as we scarcely expect to find in a poor *bourgeois* family in the height of the Revolution. These rural women write in French to which the Academy could take small exception. They play at graceful society games of *bouts rimés*, such as solace the highest circles. They read comedies, tragedies—‘*Lettres Provinciales*,’ the ‘*Nuits de Young*,’ and much beside—yet are merely poor middle-class people, noways distinguished from others, so far as can be perceived. This glimpse into the unrevealed depths of society in such an age is of as much interest historically, as is this charming, gentle, and real romance for the illustration of human life.

It is not so easy to characterise the other French book\* before us—a work which has fluttered the doves of elegant Parisian society to no small extent. Who was the person to whom the letters were ad-

dressed is a question which we do not profess to answer; but there can be no doubt that, according to all laws of honour, these letters ought to have remained in the desk of the lady to whom they were written. The public has no right to criticise and examine such a record; and all the caprice, coldness, and unkindness with which the author upbraids his *Inconnue*, seems proved against her by this betrayal of his confidence. Honour of this kind, however, seems so little binding, that few of her critics probably have the right to throw the first stone at Merimée’s correspondent; and we are not sufficiently high-minded to decline to take advantage of this most curious and striking study of life in its more delicate and visionary relationships, however illegitimate may be the pleasure thus secured. We do not know, however, that it is for any distinct biographical light thrown upon Merimée or his existence that these volumes are interesting. For our own part we are bound to admit that we have derived from them a much more vivid idea of the *Inconnue* than of her more distinguished friend. The chief attraction of the book is, that it embodies and sets before us one of those strange friendships between man and woman which are so rare as to be considered impossible by many people, yet which occur now and then, to the confusion of unbelievers, or to the encouragement of scandal, according as the spectator takes a generous or ungenerous view. The curious intercourse beginning one does not see exactly how, chiefly maintained by means of letters, consisting in great part of purely personal discussion, intimate yet distant—a friendship such as could not exist between two persons of the same sex, yet which is not

\* *Lettres à une Inconnue*, par Prosper Merimée. Paris : Levy Frères.

love, though tinged with a hundred pretty changeable lights of sentiment, such as do not appear in ordinary intimacy—has an unending charm for the reader, whose interest, like that of the principals themselves, is more piqued and entertained by this long interchange of mutual confidences, criticisms, and reproaches, never coming to anything, than by the commoner intercourse of lovers. It is, as *Merimée* himself says, an affair of the head rather than the heart (or rather, he reproaches his unknown that it is so in her case), though with just such a confused intermingling of the heart throughout as makes it always possible that at any moment one or the other might make the indiscreet step beyond bounds, which should change the friendship into love, and take all originality and piquancy out of the record. The two, however, so delicately balanced in these singular letters, never take that step. They are parallel lines which never meet; they say their mind of each other with a frankness which would be insulting in any other relationship, either of love or indifference—but which in this kind of intercourse adds an additional attraction to the half combat half union. It is true that we have only the letters on one side; but those on the other are so analysed, commented upon, and replied to, that the effect is almost as perfect as though both were before us. We are not informed how the acquaintance began, but it had been carried on with so little personal intercourse that “*nous nous sommes vus six ou sept fois en six ans, et en additionnant les minutes nous pouvons avoir passé trois ou quatre heures ensemble dont la moitié à ne nous rien dire.*” With this very small amount of personal knowledge, however, the quaintest frankness of friendship, with additions of a visionary tender-

ness such as we believe can only subsist where no actual bond is possible, animates the early letters. Here is a very early example of the terms on which they stood:—

“I will remain in Paris in October in the hope of your return. You shall see me or not according to your pleasure. You tell me of reasons which prevent you from finding occasions to see me. I respect secrets, and do not ask your motives; only I beg you to tell me if *really, truly* you have any: is it not some piece of nonsense that moves you? Have you had some sermon or other on my account? You make a great mistake in fearing me. Your natural prudence, no doubt, counts for much in your dislike to seeing me. Reassure yourself. I shall not fall in love with you. . . . Conclusion.—I should be charmed to see you. Perhaps you would thus make the acquisition of a true friend, and perhaps I might find in you what I have long sought—a woman with whom I should not be in love, and in whom I could place confidence. Probably we should both gain by closer knowledge of each other. Do, however, what your high prudence counsels. . . . If you will not see me in London,” he adds, later, “it must be given up; but I mean to see the elections. I shall soon find you in Paris, where chance will surely bring us together, if you still persist in otherwise separating us. Your reasons are pitiful, and not worth the trouble of being refuted, so much the more that you know yourself how unimportant they are. Adieu. I promise you not to fall in love with you. I have no desire to be in love, but I want a female friend. If I saw you often, and if you turned out what I believe you to be, I should feel for you a true platonic friendship. . . . You tell me, perhaps involuntarily, many things which have pleased me, and, above all, that the husband of a woman like yourself would fill you with true compassion. I believe it easily, and I add that no one could be more unhappy unless it was the man whom you loved. You must be cold and scornful in your ill-humours, with an insupportable pride, which prevents you from owning, ‘I



was wrong.' Add to this the energy of your character, which must make you disdain tears and complaints. When in the course of time and the force of circumstances we become friends, then we shall see which of us knows best how to torment the other. My hair stands on end at the mere thought. . . . Between ourselves, I don't think that you have yet begun to enjoy the possession of that viscera called the heart. You have pains in the head, pleasures of the head, but the viscera named heart develops itself rarely before twenty-five, and in the 46th degree of latitude. You will frown with your beautiful black eyebrows, and say, 'The insolent doubts that I have a heart,' for it is the great thing to which everybody pretends nowadays. Since so many romances and so-called impassioned poems have been made, all women profess to have a heart. Wait a little, and when you really possess such a thing tell me something about it."

This tone, half tender, half mocking, prolongs itself through all the letters. He reproaches her with her "Satanic pride;" then, unwilling to leave her in enjoyment of a grand quality, declares that it is nothing but "a petty vanity." "You have grown more beautiful," he says, after a chance meeting, "but you seem to have acquired, on the other hand, a pretty dose of egotism and hypocrisy which may be very useful, but are nothing to brag of." "I leave you to your conscience," he adds, in another letter, "which, I am sure, must sometimes be more severe than I am, when I accuse you of treachery and carelessness. Hypocrisy, which you practise very well, but in sport, will play you a trick ere long: that is to say, it will become a real part of you. As for coquetry, which is the inseparable companion of the villanous sin which you delight in, you have always had it. It becomes you well enough when you temper it with a certain freedom, and by your heart and imagination. Further——fur-

ther, what shall I say to you? You have beautiful dark hair and a handsome blue shawl, and you are always amiable when you choose." So the provoking but charming correspondence goes on; and the picture of such a woman as romancists love grows upon the canvas. A beautiful creature full of wit, full of paradox, as changeable as the wind, reserved yet frank, shy, wild, mysterious, vain, rational, and tender, ever ready to engage in the same lively war of words; now and then yielding to the pleasure of a long ramble through the woods (which seems to be almost their only way of visiting, to judge from the letters); sometimes condescending to meet her friend before the Joconda in the Louvre—again refusing, out of mere caprice, to see him at all; abusing him in her letters as he abuses her, always *badinant*, in fine French, no doubt, if not perhaps as good as his who is one of the sublime Forty of the Academy all the while! The years 1843 and 1844 seem to have been the most intimate period of their friendship, and are full of those walks in the woods; though so little of the external world is in the record that we scarcely know where the woods are in which the friends roam, always quarrelling, making it up, teasing each other, sustaining each other, in this delightful confusion of half love, half enmity, the very charm and power of which is, that it never comes to anything. We do not know whether slander has breathed upon the curious story; we have enough of ill tales at home without going to seek for them in Parisian gossip. But the letters never change in character, as we believe they must have done had there been any change in the sentiment. Now and then, in the years we have indicated, the Academician indeed gives signs of losing his head, or being about to do so,

and we find our confidence somewhat shaken in his whimsical reassurance — “je ne deviendrai jamais amoureux de vous ;”—but the *Satanique orgueil, la fierté diabolique*, the capricious coldness and changeableness of his partner, never seem to change. He complains of them as much after years of intimacy as in their first acquaintance. “Your sublime indifference, true or false (a thing I have never been able to make sure of), irritates me greatly,” he writes in 1854, after a dozen years of close intimacy. This irritation and this doubt could scarcely have existed had the two ever confessed themselves lovers instead of friends.

A touching gravity steals, however, into this amusing series of personal confidences and disunions towards the end. Even in 1869 he still upbraids her a little ; but with what subdued tones, and at the same time with how much added confidence and freedom, all fears of impropriety and scandal being over ! “Why would you not wait two minutes ?” he writes, when, already an old man worn with illness and suffering, he hears that his once *farouche* and difficult friend has been to his house. “You would not let them tell me, you brought back my book only, and you call that a visit to a sick man ! Your charity is easily satisfied ; but we will not reckon so closely ; besides, I am better, and I want you to be my guide to the Exposition. . . . Do you remember the time when I was yours ?” Throughout all this last volume there is more of the world and of things, less of the personal discussion of old ; but the *badinage* never quite dies out, till death begins to come in. “Chère ami, je suis bien malade, si malade que c’est une rude affaire d’écrire,” he writes on the 23d September 1870, two hours only before he died. “Je vous em-

brasse” are the last words, and it is, we think, the first time they are said.

We have no space left to speak of Merimée in his own person ; though no book could be more thoroughly autobiographical, the vein is so peculiar that we feel it to be much more the record of one very remarkable relationship between two people than the life of an individual. The eloquent man of letters, senator of the empire, courtier, official, Academician, demands another kind of study at large ; and this thread which runs through his life, so mingled of different strands, has an interest all its own, the unity of which we do not attempt to interfere with in our limited space by any excursions into the broader web of his existence. To those, however, who want something more of Merimée than the *Inconnue* offers, the sketch supplied by M. Taine, which forms the preface to these volumes, will be interesting. As for the amateur of gossip, he may leave the first volume altogether aside, but will find various indiscretions in the second. The incidental notices of the court at Compiègne or elsewhere are, however, very barren of details which can furnish materials for the news-monger ; but the vague light thrown upon the imperial household is always pleasant, and represents it in a favourable aspect. Otherwise there is little beyond the most passing mention of public affairs. The *Inconnue* is all and in all in the letters addressed to her. Here is, however, one humorous and amusing sketch of Parisian literary society which seems worth quoting :

“I dined about twelve days ago at the house of an Academician with Rachel. The dinner was made for the purpose of presenting Beranger to her. A number of great men were present. She came late, and I did not like her appearance ; the men



talked so many follies to her, and the women did so many about her, that I remained in my corner; besides, I had not spoken to her for more than a year. Beranger, with his ordinary good sense and sincerity, told her that she did wrong in wasting her talents in *salons*—that there was only one public for her, that of the Théâtre Français. Madlle. Rachel seemed to approve the moral, and, to show how much she profited by it, proceeded to play the first act of 'Esther.' Some one was necessary to read the replies in the scene, and she sent me Racine for this purpose solemnly by the hands of an Academician, who acted the part of *Cicisbeo*. I answered rudely that I knew nothing about verses, and that there were many in the room who, being of that trade themselves, would scan them better than I should. Hugo excused himself on account of his eyes—another for some other reason; finally, the master of the house was the victim. Imagine Rachel, in black, between a piano and a tea-table, with a door behind her, making up her theatrical face. The change thus made before our eyes was fine and amusing—it lasted about two minutes—then she began—

"Est-ce toi, chère Elise?"

The confidant in the midst of the answer let fall his spectacles and his book: ten minutes passed before the place and the eyes were recovered. The audience saw that Esther began to be irritated. She resumed: the door behind her opens, and a servant appears; signs are made to him to withdraw: he goes, but cannot manage to shut the door, which creaking and quivering accompanies Rachel with a melodious and amusing *cri-crac*. As there seemed to be no end to this, Madlle. Rachel put her hand on her heart and became faint, but, like a person accustomed to die on the stage, giving full time for help to come. During this interval, Hugo and M. Thiers flew at each other's heads on the subject of Racine. Hugo said that Racine was an inferior genius, and Corneille a great one. 'You say that,' answered Thiers, 'because you are a great genius; you are the Corneille (Hugo put on a

modest aspect) of an age of which Casimir Delavigne is the Racine.' I leave you to imagine if the modesty was appropriate. However, the faint passed off and the act was finished. Some one who knew Madlle. Rachel well, said, 'How she must have sworn to-night as she went away!'

We do not know whether we ought, at the end of our paper, to enter upon any discussion of the other and very different biography before us—that of Dr Guthrie. So popular a book (we perceive it is in a fifth edition) and so popular a man are rarely subjected to any criticism which is just or genuine. Friends applaud and enemies abuse, and the preacher dead is like the preacher alive, the possessor of a curiously fictitious reputation, which neither will have, nor is likely to receive, any real scrutiny. We expected, in taking up Dr Guthrie's Autobiography, to renew the sensations with which we remember to have listened to his sermons; a mixture of admiration, amusement, and repugnance, such as perhaps no one but a popular preacher can excite to the same degree; now struck by a real bit of eloquence almost reaching genius, tears forced to our eyes in spite of ourselves, and the high thrill of sympathy expanding our breasts; now overwhelmed with pitifullest bathos, at which only propriety and a recollection of where we were prevented us from laughing; and again, sickened by some vulgar bit of bombast;—the preacher going on all the while in sublime unconsciousness of these variations, and to all appearance thinking the bombast the best. This curious power of saying occasional fine things, and being now and then moved by the higher poetic inspirations, while quite unconscious of it, and feeling a much greater personal relish

for the surrounding claptrap and bombast—is very bewildering to the philosophical observer; nor is Guthrie the only man by many in whom this confusion is apparent. It must always remain a mystery to the looker-on how a speaker capable of the one should be also capable of the other; or how those occasional gleams of higher light should stream forth not only (as it seems) without intention on the part of the producer, but actually without any consciousness in his mind that he has done better than usual. These momentary movements, however, of a better inspiration, are not to be found in the *Autobiography*, which is the cheerfullest record of true and genuine and unsuspecting Philistinism which we have met with for a long time. A more perfectly good-natured, hearty, cheery, confident sense that everything is not only for the best in this best of all possible worlds, but that everything about Thomas Guthrie—position, disposition, circumstances, antecedents, education, and surroundings—are of the most desirable and satisfactory description, could not be. There is the little drawback attending this most fluent and amiable sense of one's personal advantages, that it almost invariably throws a slight discredit upon the rest of the world, which can scarcely be so good as we, or our perfections would not show so clearly. This implication is perhaps more excusable in the case of a really religious man who believes to the letter that all the world lieth in wickedness, and that it is by special grace that he and his are different from others, than in any other circumstances; but it is in every case an affair of temperament much more than of doctrine. Guthrie's was the kind of mind which is specially subject to this most agreeable sort of self-delusion. Big,

strong, healthy, vigorous, and full of the most ready and telling of talents, that of natural oratory, he is always cheerfully, unconsciously in the foreground of the scene, which he cannot treat or think of but in subordination to himself; and his delight in his own superiority is a totally different thing from the complacency of the intellectualist, being much more innocent and natural, and even praiseworthy, since, so far as he is aware of it at all, it appears to him gratitude for exceptional privileges and advantages which he would be wanting in his duty if he did not acknowledge. Here is a very simple instance of his cheery depreciation of other people, and comfortable sense of superiority, which we choose, not for its effective character, but because it is the first thing which catches our eye on opening the book at hazard. Dr Guthrie had just been visiting a fever-stricken house, when he met in the street “an eminent minister belonging to our party.”

“We were in the thick of the great Church fight that issued in the Disruption. He crossed over to me, eagerly asking the news about our affairs. I had no right to expose him to danger, so I said at once, ‘My good sir, I am not very *canny* just now.’

“‘How?’ he replied; ‘have you been seeing any case of typhus fever?’

“‘Never saw a worse,’ was my answer; at which, leaving the Church to her fate, and amusing me so as to forget all my own peril, he went off like the shot of a gun! Some good and great men—and he was both—have a nervous dread of infection; which happily I have not.”

Everybody, however, or almost everybody, whom Dr Guthrie encounters, falls somehow or other into this position of inferiority—the French nation, the Church of Eng-



land, the human race generally: not that he loves mankind less, but his own blithe, confident, dauntless personality more. No particular unkindness to others is involved; only a supreme sense of personal advantage, not always disagreeable, and almost always amusing. There is, however, one point in this universal glorification of his concerns and belongings which is in more than usually rampant bad taste. The great event called the Disruption in Scotland—the act by which many ministers of the Scotch Church gave up their livings for the sake of a principle—is spoken of here, as in many other books of the kind, with a sort of delirious self-gratulation, as proving an amount of self-sacrificing power equal to any apostolic martyrdom. That there were cases in which it was, we do not doubt—where poor country clergymen, un-

distinguished by any powers which could insure popular support, gave up for a precarious possibility their certain means of existence, with no power even of trumpeting their sacrifice to the world. But it is an insult to the most ordinary good sense to ask us to believe that on the part of such a man as Guthrie, the very type of the popular preacher, there was either risk, doubt, or hardship in such a renunciation. Good taste at least would dictate that in these enthusiastic bursts of admiration over an event in which the speaker played a leading part, he should at least acknowledge frankly that the privations must have been restricted to the poorer voiceless brethren who marched after him, victims, voluntary or involuntary, of a great party movement—and could not, by any possibility, have affected himself.

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## THE STORY OF VALENTINE;

## AND HIS BROTHER.

## PART IV.—CHAPTER X.

THE Hewan was not a cottage of gentility. It was too small, too homely, too much like a growth of the soil, to belong to any class that could be described as *ornée*. The roof indeed was not thatched, but it was of red tiles, so overgrown with lichens as almost to resemble a thatch, except in the rich colour, which, to tell the truth, very few people appreciated. Its present owner was a shopkeeper in Lasswade, in whose heart there were many searchings about the vulgarity of its appearance, which he felt sure was the reason why it was not more easily let for the summer; and this good man had almost made up his mind to the expense required for a good slate roof, when Mr Pringle fortunately appeared and engaged it "as it was." A sort of earthen embankment, low and thick, encircled the little platform on which it stood. There was nothing behind it but sky, with a light embroidery of trees; for it occupied the highest "brae head" in the neighbourhood, and in a more level country would have been described as situated on the top of a hill. Before it lay the whole course of the Esk, not all visible indeed, narrowing here and there between high banks, now and then hiding itself under the foliage, or capriciously turning a corner out of sight,—but always lending to the landscape that charm of life which water more than anything imparts to the inanimate world around. Cliffs and trees, and bits of bold brown bank, and soft stretches of greensward, all took a certain significance and explained their

*raison d'être* by the river. The houses, too, from the dignified roofs of Rosseraig lower down the stream, showing the turrets, which little Violet supposed to be made of gold, between the clouds of trees—down to the square white houses of the paper-mill people on the other side, and here and there rough red tiles of a cottage of earlier date—the river was the link which held them all together. The usual geographical indications on Eskside were not by the points of the compass, as is so common in Scotland, but by the stream—"up the water" or "down the water." The Hewan was a long way up the water from Lasswade, yet not so far but that many a visitor would climb the brae to "get their tea" with old Mrs Moffatt, who was the mother of the proprietor,—living in charge of the house, and not too proud to superintend the domestic arrangements of small families who hired it for the summer. She had a little room with a "box-bed," that mystery of discomfort and frowsiness, but which was neither frowy nor uncomfortable in the hands of the brisk little old woman—which her son had built on to the back of the house for her, and in which she continued summer and winter, retiring herself there in dignified privacy when "a family" was in full possession. Mrs Moffatt's little room, which had been made on purpose for her, had no communication with the cottage. She considered it a very dignified retirement for her old age. John Moffatt, her son, was a shoemaker in Lasswade; and when



the savings of his cobbling enabled him to buy the Hewan, and establish his mother there, no noble matron in a stately jointure-house was ever half so proud. Such a feeling indeed as pride, or even satisfaction, rarely moves the mind of the dethroned queen who has to move out of the house she has swayed for years, and descend into obscurity when the humiliation of widowhood befalls her. Mrs Moffatt, good old soul, had no such past to look back upon. She had been long a widow, knocking about the world, doing whatever homely job she could find, struggling to bring up her children; and the Hewan and the little back room represented a kind of earthly paradise to the cobbler's mother. The summer lodgers who paid her for cooking and keeping in order their little rooms, gave the frugal old soul enough to live on during the winter; and when by chance a family came which had no need of her, good John, out of the abundance of the rent, allowed his mother the few weekly shillings she required. She had a little kitchen-garden to the back, surrounding her nest, as she called it, and kept a pig, which was her pride and joy, and a few chickens. If she could but have had a cow, the old woman would have been perfectly happy; but as it is not, I suppose—or at least so people say—good for us to be perfectly happy, the cow was withheld from her list of mercies granted. Good little soul, her mouth watered sometimes when she thought of the butter she could make, and of the cheeriness of having “a neebor's lassie” coming in with her pitcher for the milk, or even the luxury of a “wee drap real cream” in her cup of tea. But to mourn for unattainable things had never been her way; and when she went “doon the toun” with a basketful of eggs for her daughter-

in-law, she was as proud and happy in her homely gift as if it had been gold or diamonds. She was a friendly body everybody testified, and known up the water and down the water as always serviceable and always cheery. When there was any gossip going on of an interesting nature, some one in Lasswade or the neighbourhood always found opportunity of taking a walk up to the Hewan and a cup of tea with old Jean, who was every one's friend.

On such occasions Mrs Moffatt carefully skimmed everything that looked like cream from the milk which had been standing in a bowl for this purpose since the morning, and put on her little kettle, and took out her best china, and even prepared some “toasted breed” over and above the oat-cakes, which were her usual fare. The window of the old woman's nest looked out upon a dark wilderness of trees, which descended down a steep bank to the upper Esk, and shut out any view. Her door was generally open, as well as the window, so that the rustling of the trees and the singing of the kettle kept pleasant company. Her boarded floor was as clean as soap and water could make it, and her hearth well swept and bright; a huge rug, made by her own hands (for she was a capable old wife) out of strips of cloth of all colours, looked cosy before the fire. Her bed, like a berth in a ship, appeared behind, with a very bright bit of chintz for curtains, and covered with a gay patchwork quilt. She had some brilliantly-coloured pictures on the walls—a wonderful little boy with big eyes and a curly dog, and a little girl with long curls and a doll, not more staring and open-eyed than herself. The old lady thought they were like “our wee Johnnie and Phemie down the toun,” and found them “grand company.” She had some brass candle-

sticks and a glorious tea-caddy on the mantelpiece, and such a tea-tray set up against the wall as would have made all other ornamentations pale. "The worst o't is, ye maun be awfu' solitary, especially in the winter time, when there's naebody ben the house, and few on the road that can help it," her friends would say. "Me solitary!" said old Jean. "I'm thankful to my Maker I never was ane that was lanesome. I'm fond o' company, real fond o' company—but for a while now and then it's no' that ill to have your ain thoughts. And then there's the hens, poor things, aye canty and neighbour-like, troubling their heads about their sma' families, just as I used to do mysel'—and Grumphy yonder's just a great diversion; and when it's a cauld night, and I shut to the door, there's the fire aye stirring and birring, and the wee nest as warm as can be, and the auld clock, tick, tick, aye doing its duty, poor thing, though it might be tired this hunder year or twa it's been at it; and there's a hantle reading in the 'Courant,' though maybe the 'Scotsman' 's bigger, and I'm on the Leebereal side mysel'. Toots! solitary! there's naebody less solitary than me."

A cheerful soul is always a social centre, however humble it may be. Jean's friends accordingly went to see her, not out of pity, as to cheer a poor solitary old woman, but for their own amusement, which in this kind of social duty is by far the strongest motive. She was about the best-informed woman on all Eskside. Every kind of gossip made its way to her; and I doubt whether the people in Rosscraig House themselves, knew so well all that had happened and all that everybody said on the night of little Valentine's arrival. She heard a great deal even from Mrs Harding herself, the housekeeper, who could

not resist the temptation of confiding a few details, not generally known, to her old friend's keeping. For Jean was known to be a person in whom it was possible to repose confidence, not one that would betray the trust placed in her. However, the tables had been turned in Mrs Moffatt's favour, since it became known in Rosscraig that Mr Pringle had taken the Hewan for the season. Lady Eskside herself got out of her carriage one day as she passed, and went to pay the old woman a visit. She went into the cottage and complimented old Jean on the excellent order in which she kept it. "I hear it has been taken by a relation of ours—Mr Pringle," she said.

"I didna ken he was a relation of your leddyship's; but it's Mr Pringle sure enough. I was sure I kent the face—no doubt I've seen him coming or going about the House."

"He comes very seldom to see us," said Lady Eskside. "In fact, before my grandson was born he considered himself the heir—after my son, you know; and he has been dreadfully disappointed, poor man, since. Val, don't go too near the dyke!"

"And this is the heir, nae doubt, my lady?—eh, what a bonnie bairn! Nane that see him need ever ask the rank he's born to. He has the look of a bit little prince. And I wouldna say but he was fond of his own way whiles——"

"More than whiles, more than whiles," said the old lady, graciously; "he is just a handful. But Mr Pringle has a large family, if it's him. He will never find room for his bairns in this little bit of a place."

"It's chiefly for the wee miss he had with him, my lady. She's delicate, they say; and if ever a man was wrapt up in a bairn—and her so delicate——"



"Dear me, I am sorry to hear it!" said Lady Eskside, whose sympathy was instantly aroused; "will it be anything the matter with the chest? I am always most afraid for the chest in children. Mr Pringle is a most excellent man. He has been a little disappointed and soured perhaps—but he is an excellent person. The air is sharp up here, Jean—too sharp for a delicate child. If she should want anything, cream or fresh milk in the morning, be sure you let me know. Cream is excellent for the lungs. I like it better than that oil that doctors give now—nasty-smelling stuff. But if there is anything the poor child should want, be sure you send to me."

Lady Eskside was an acute woman, but she was foolish in this particular. She caught her own healthy blooming grandchild on the edge of the low embankment, where he was hazarding his life in warm enjoyment of the risk, and gave him a kiss though he deserved a whipping, and said, "Poor Sandy Pringle!" with the most genuine feeling. She went into Lord Eskside's library when her drive was over, full of this information. "You need not alarm yourself about Sandy Pringle, poor man," she said; "he has taken the Hewan on account of his poor little girl who is delicate—her chest, I am afraid. If you remember, his mother died of consumption quite young. It's a terrible scourge when it's in a family. My heart is sore for him, poor man. When the child comes we must have her here, and see if anything can be done. Perhaps if they were to take it in time, and send her to Madeira or some of these mild places; there is always hope with a bairn."

"My word, my lady, but you go fast," said the old lord, with his little grey eyes twinkling under his

shaggy eyebrows. But he did not convince her any more than she convinced him. And indeed, when the Pringle family began to appear about the woods, every member of the household at Rosseraig, down to my lady's young footman, felt that curiosity of opposition in respect to them which is almost as eager as the curiosity of partisanship. Mrs Harding the housekeeper had for her part taken up Lord Eskside's view of the subject, and when she too made a visit to Jean Moffatt one evening of the early summer, her purpose was of a more sternly investigating order than that of Lady Eskside.

"How do you like the folk ben the house?" she said, as she sat at tea; the cake she had brought "in a present" was placed on the table in the place of honour, and the tea was "masking" before the fire. It was a soft evening in May. The door was open, but the fire was not disagreeable, and the sound of the Esk far down below the brae, and the rustling of the leaves close round the house, were softened by the air of spring into a pleasant murmur. The family "ben the house" being separated by a good Scotch stone wall from old Mrs Moffatt's nest, gave no sound of their neighbourhood, and nothing but that wild but soft cadence of the waters and the trees interrupted the homely domestic harmonies more closely at hand—the cheery little stir and *pétitement* of the fire, the singing of the kettle, the purring of the cat, the ticking of the old clock. Mrs Harding combined an earnest desire for information with a very pleasant sense of the immediate comfort and ease which she was enjoying. My lord and my lady were "out to their dinner," and Harding himself had promised to daunder up to the Hewan in the gloaming and fetch his wife home.

Being "out to her tea" was an unusual event in the housekeeper's responsible life, and the enjoyment it gave her was great. "Eh, how quiet and pleasant it is!" she added, almost with enthusiasm; "this is one of the days you can hear the grass growin': and to get away from a' the stew and bustle o' the dinner, the hot fire, and the smell o' the meat, and thae taupies that let one thing burn, and another boil over. If I were to envy onybody in the world, I think, Jean Moffatt, it would be you."

"Hoots," said the old woman, with a pleasant consciousness that her lot was enviable; "when you and your man make up your mind to retire, my certy, ye'll be a hantle better off than the like o' me."

"And when will that be?" said Mrs Harding, with a sigh; "no as lang as *They* live, for they couldna do without my man an' me. But I was saying, how do you like the folk ben the house?"

"You shouldna let yourself be keepit in bondage," said Jean, with a touch of sarcasm; "when folk *maun* do without ye, they *can* do without ye—I've aye seen that. Oh, I like them real well. They come and they gang, and now it's a breakfast, and now the bairns' dinner—nothing more—and aye a maid to serve them; so it suits me fine. The lads are stirring boys, and Missie's a darling. She makes me think upon one I lost, that was the sweetest o' a' my flock. Eh! if you could but keep a girlie like that aye the same, what a pleasure it would be in a house! But the bit things grow up, and marry, and have weans of their own, and get to be just as careworn and wrinkled as yourself. I think whiles my Marg'ret, with ten of a family, and a man no better than he should be, is aulder than me."

"It's the course of nature," said

Mrs Harding — "we maunna grumble; but I'm sure when I see a' that folk have to go through with their families, I'm thankful I have nane o' my ain. Ye ken your Mr Pringle sets up to be *our* heir! It's real ridiculous if it wasna provoking. I could laugh when I think o't. He must have been terrible cast down when Mr Richard brought hame his boy."

"But I thought it was a randy wife, not Mr Richard——"

"Whisht!" said the housekeeper; "we'll say no more about that. It's no' a story I pretend to understand, but I'm rather thinking it was some Italian or other that Mr Richard sent with the bairn. Foreigners are strange cattle. And whether it was man or woman I wouldna say, for nobody saw them but my man, and he's confused about the story. But this is clear, it was Mr Richard sent the bairn hame; and reason guid. You should have heard his man on Eetaly and thae places. You might as well sell your soul to Satan, and better too, for you would aye get something by the bargain—and there's no' even *that* comfort out there. Ye canna but wonder at Providence that lets a' that play-acting and fiddling and breaking o' the Sabbath gang on, and takes nae mair heed than if a' thae reprobats were sober, decent, kirk-going folk like ourselves. But I'm thinking their time will come."

"Poor bodies! I daur to say they ken nae better," said Jean. "It'll be by the mother's side that the Pringles and the Rosses count kin?"

"Na; how could that be, when he thinks himsel' the heir? When ye've ance lived in a high family, ye learn a heap of things. Titles never gang the way o' the spinning-wheel, nor land that's entailed, as they call it. It's lad comes after



lad, and the lasses never counted. I canna say it's according to justice, but it's law, and there's nae mair to be said. This is the way of it, for my lady told me hersel': A Ross married a Pringle that was an heiress two or three hunder years ago, and took his wife's name, which was a poor exchange, though I'm saying nothing against the name of Pringle; my first place was with the Pringles of Whytfield, a real fine family. And now that a' the Rosses have died down to the present family, the Pringles have come uppermost. My lady herself was six or seven years married before Mr Richard was born. So ye see they've had the cup to their lips, as you may say, more than once. That's a thing I could not bide. I would rather be my man's wife, knowing I could be no better all my days, than expect to be my lady, and never win further ben."

"It's much the same in a' ranks o' life," said Jean. "There's my Marg'ret; it's been her desire a' her days to get the house at the Loanhead, with a nice bit land, that would gang far to feed her family. She's had the promise o't for ten years back. Old John Thomson was to flit afore he died, but that fell through; and when he died, they couldna refuse to let his son come in; and then it was reported through a' the parish that young John was to emigrate——"

"I've heard that," said Mrs Harding; "and I aye give my advice against it: for nae man will ever succeed if he doesna work hard; and if he'll work hard, he'll do very well at hame."

"Young John was to emigrate," continued Mrs Moffatt; "and it was a' settled about his roup, and Marg'ret was sure of getting in by the term; when what does he do but change his mind! I thought the poor lass would have broken her

heart; and oh, the fecht she has with a' thae bairns and a weirdless man. Then he had that awfu' illness, and it was reported he was dying. My poor Marg'ret came to me the day he was prayed for in the kirk, with red een. 'I'm doing naething but pray for him,' she said; 'for oh, if I didna pray for him to mend, I would wish him dead, mother; and what comfort could I have in onything that came to me after that?' The man got weel," said the old woman, with a sigh; "he's as weel as you or me, and a hantle younger, and he canna make up his mind if he'll go or bide. It's awfu' tantalising; and it happens in a' classes of life. I'm real sorry for the poor gentleman, and I hope he doesna take it to heart like my Marg'ret, poor lass!"

"Ye mean well," said Mrs Harding, half affronted; "but to pity the next heir is like grudging the Almighty's mercies to us. Folk should learn to be content. I'm no saying for your Marg'ret; but Mr Pringle is as weel off as he has ony right to be, and why should he come spying upon my lord and my lady? Folk should learn to be content."

"It's awfu' easy when it's no' your ain case," said Jean; "an' I suppose we've a' as much or mair than we deserve; but that does not satisfy your wame when you're hungry, nor your back when you're cauld. The maister has never been out here since the first time. The leddy came once, a fine sensible woman, that looks weel after her family; but it's Missie that's the queen o' the Hewan. As it's such a fine night, and nane but bairns in the house, if you'll come ben we'll maybe see them. I'll have to think o' some supper for them, for thae lang laddies are just wolves for their supper. Or maybe you'll first take another cup o' tea?"

Mrs Harding declined this hospitable offer, and rose, taking her shawl and bonnet with her, for it was nearly the time, she remarked, when she "must be going." The two lingered outside to look at the hens, and especially that careful but premature mother who had begun to "sit," though the weather was still but moderately adapted for the fledglings; and then they made a momentary divergence to see "Grumphy," who was the pride of his mistress's heart. "I'll no' kill him till after harvest, and I'll warrant you there'll be no better meat

between this and Edinburgh. Poor beast!" she said, with a mixture of the practical and sentimental, "he's a fine creature, and has a fine disposition; but it's what we a' must come to. And yonder's where I would keep the coo—if I had ane," she added with a sigh, pointing to a little paddock. The cow was to old Jean what the barony of Eskside was to Mr Pringle, and the house at the Loanhead to her daughter Marg'ret: but the old woman's lot was the easiest, in that the object of her desire was not almost within her longing grasp.

#### CHAPTER XI.

Lord and Lady Eskside, as the reader has seen, were not quite in accord about their grandson, or at least they took different views of the circumstances which attended his arrival. They took (perhaps) each the view which came naturally to man and woman in such a position of affairs. The old lord, although himself at length absolutely convinced that the boy was his son's child and his own heir, was deeply oppressed by the consciousness that though there was moral certainty of this fact, there was no legal proof. "Moral certainty's a grand thing," said Willie Maitland, the factor, a man who knew the Eskside affairs to the very depths, and from whom there were no secrets possible; but he spoke so doubtfully as to inflame the mind of my lady, who sat by listening to their talk with an impatience beyond words.

"A grand thing!" cried Lady Eskside; "it is simply everything: what would you have more? And who can judge in such a question but ourselves? my son, who must know best, and my old lord and myself, who are next nearest? What do the men mean by their dubious

looks? What can you have more than certainty? Mr Maitland, with your knowledge of the law, I would like you to answer me that."

"Well, madam, as my lord says," said Willie Maitland, who was old-fashioned in his manners, "there is legal proof wanted. It may be just a deficiency on our part—and indeed, according to the Scriptures themselves, law is a sign of moral deficiency—but everything has to be summered and wintered before the Lords of Session."

"And what have the Lords of Session to do with our boy?" said my lady, indignantly. "I hope we are not so doited but what we can take care of him ourselves."

"My dear Catherine, that is not the question."

"What is the question, I would like to know?" said Lady Eskside, flushing with the heat of argument. "Do I need the Lords of Session to tell me whose son my own bairn is? I think you are all taking leave of your senses with your formalities and your legal proof. Poor Alexander Pringle there, up the water, cannot bring his delicate little girlie to the country for change of air but you



think he's plotting against Val. If this suspicion and distrust of every mortal is what your bonnie law brings, I'm thankful for my part that I know nothing about the law; and I wish everybody was of my mind."

Lord Eskside and his factor went out quite cowed from my lady's presence. They were half ashamed both of the law and themselves, and I think the visit which they made to the land which was being marked out for "feus" was necessary to get up their spirits. Lord Eskside was rather excited about these feus—allotments of land to be let for building, upon a kind of copyhold which secured a perennial revenue in the shape of ground-rent to the proprietor: though he was a little disposed at the same time to alarm himself as to the persons who might come to live there, and perhaps bring Radical votes into the county, and corrupt a constituency still stanch, amid Scotland's many defections, to "the right side." This public anxiety was a relief to his mind from the private anxiety; for however public-spirited a man may be, and however profound his interest in politics, the biting of a little private trouble is more sharp and keen than that patriotic concern for his country which drives him wild with excitement over a contested election. Willie Maitland the factor—a man "very well connected," half a lawyer, half a farmer, and spoken of by every soul in the parish and on the estate by his Christian name—was big and burly and easy-minded, and took things much more easily than his lord. "By the time there is any question of the succession," he said, "the story will be clean forgotten. It will be many a year, I hope, before Richard succeeds, let alone the boy."

"Ay, ay, that is very true," said the old lord, knitting his brows; "it may be many a year; but it might be a question of days, Willie, for anything you and me can tell. Well, well; for the moment we can make nothing better of it; and here are the feus. Good morning, doctor! I hope you're all well at the Manse. It is a fine day for a walk. We are going to take a look at Willie Maitland's pet scheme here."

"An excellent scheme," said Dr Bruce, the parish minister, turning to accompany them, with all that sober pleasure in something new which moves the inhabitants of a tranquil rural district in favour of such gentle revolutions as do not affect their own habits or comforts; and the three gentlemen spent an agreeable half-hour pacing and measuring the allotments. While they were thus engaged, Lady Eskside drove past with Val on the coach-box, making believe to drive. "There is my lady with her boy," said Lord Eskside, waving his hand to them as they passed; but he thought he saw an incredulous smile upon the face of the minister, which took away from him all pleasure in the feus.

My lady worked while my lord thus allowed himself to be overcast by every doubtful look. Strong in her moral certainty, she took the means which lay in her power to spread this conviction far and wide; and as she worked very hard at this undertaking, she had a right to the success, which she enjoyed thoroughly. Her chief work was with the child himself—the strange little unknown being unable to express all the wonderments that were in him at his change of lot, who was in her hands as wax in some respects, while in others she could make but little of him. Val had reconciled himself to the revolution in his fate with

wonderful facility. He was so young, that after a few fits of violent weeping and crying for his mother and his brother, he had to all appearance forgotten them; and being indulged in every whim, and petted to the top of his bent, with abundant air, exercise, toys, and caresses, had so adapted himself to his new position as to look familiar and at ease in it before many weeks had passed. What vague recollections and baby thoughts upon the subject might be in him, nobody knew; but as childish recollections are in most cases carefully cultivated and exist by means of constant reminders, I suppose Val, deprived of such aids, actually did forget much more readily than children usually do. Lady Eskside devoted herself specially to his polish and social education, to the amending of his manners and speech, and the imparting of those acts of politeness which are the special inheritance of small gentlemen: she succeeded, to her own surprise, much more perfectly than she had hoped to do. Val took to the teaching in which no books nor perplexing printed symbols were involved, with perhaps a precocious sense of humour, but certainly a readiness of apprehension which filled my lady with joy. She taught him to bow, to open the door for her when she went out or in, to listen, and to reply; and what was still more wonderful, to sit still when circumstances demanded that painful amount of self-restraint. "A little gentleman tries first of all to be pleasant to other people," said his instructress. "When you are out playing, you shall please yourself, Val, and everybody shall help you to enjoy yourself; but in company a gentleman always thinks of others, not of himself." And having well laid down this principle, my lady proceeded,

with great minuteness, to details. She thought it was a certain sign of his gentle blood that he learned his social lesson with such quickness; but I am inclined to believe that Valentine's success was owing much more surely to that latent dramatic power which exists in almost all children, and which they are so proud and happy to exercise on every possible occasion. Certainly, whatever the cause was, the result was triumphant. When Val was alone—in the nursery, where he ruled like a little despot, or out of doors, where he conducted himself like a tiny desperado, always in mischief—he was uncontrollable; but in the drawing-room, when his grandmother received her visitors, or when he accompanied her on the visits which it was now a point in her diplomacy to make, no little paladin born in the purple could have shown more perfect manners, or behaved himself more gracefully. He was acting a part, well defined and recognisable, and the rôle gave him pleasure. Not that the child himself was conscious of this, or could have defined what his instinct enabled him to do so perfectly; but yet the mental exercise was one that excited him, and called forth all his powers. The little actor threw himself off, as he jumped from the coach-box, where he had been driving wildly, with precocious dash and nerve, restrained, with difficulty, by the cautious old coachman, who knew exactly how much my lady could put up with—and assumed in a moment the gracious character of the little prince—suave, soft, and courteous—saying what he had to say with childish frankness, and keeping himself still and in order with a virtue which was heroic. From the Dowager Duchess to the farmers' wives on Eskside, everybody was satisfied by these perform-



ances ; and no reasonable creature who had seen Val's little exhibition could have lent a moment's credence to the vulgar story of the "randy wife." "I don't see the strong likeness to his father," said the Dowager Duchess, who was, as it were, the last court of appeal and highest tribunal of social judgment in the county. "To me there's another type of feature very evident besides the difference of complexion ; but in manners, he's his father's son. Not a lout, like Castleton's boy, who ought to be a gentleman, heaven knows ! if race is anything—on both sides of the house." Lady Eskside felt the implied sting about "both sides of the house," but bore it heroically, knowing that the Marquis of Hightowers, the Duke of Castleton's only son, was like any ploughman's child beside her "bonnie boy ;" and it did not occur to her, any more than it did to Val himself, that the whole secret of his success was his superiority in dramatic power, and in enjoyment of that suppressed but exquisite joke of mystification which children by nature love so dearly. Probably it was the blood of gipsy and tramp and roadside mime in Val's veins which gave him more facility than usual in the representation ; but the same gift shows in every nursery in a greater or lesser degree. Little Violet Pringle, with her dolls around her, discoursing to them—scolding one for its naughtiness, and another for having neglected its lessons, with high maternal dignity—was not more purely histrionic than was Val when he played at being young prince and good boy, according to his grandmother's injunctions, and enjoyed the mystification—unless when it chanced to last too long.

"He is a strange child," said Lady Eskside to her favourite confidant, Mary Percival, whose visits

became more frequent and prolonged after this, and whose curiosity about the boy, whom she was not fond of, gave a certain point of interest and almost excitement to the pleasure she had in seeing her old friend. "He is a strange boy. When he goes out with me, you should see, Mary, the gentleman he is. The politest manners—better than Richard's, for Richard was shy ; never too forward, nor taking too much upon him, but a smile and an answer for everybody ; and ready to open the door or hand you anything, as if he had been brought up to it all his life. But when he comes back, he is just a whirlwind, nothing else—what is the meaning of it ? I sometimes think the spirits of both the bairns have got together in one frame."

"You have heard nothing of the other ?"

"Nothing ; nor of *her*, which is hard to bear. I cannot say for my own part either that I feel it so hard ; but I'm sorry for my old lord. I never saw him so full of fears and fancies. He thinks unless we can find her and the other boy, that Val's place in the world will never be sure. I tell him it's just nonsense. Who has anything to do with it but ourselves ? and who can be such judges as we are ? But he will not listen to me."

"I think Lord Eskside must be right," said Mary. "Lawsuits are terrible things, and bring great trouble. I know something about that."

"Lawsuits !" said Lady Eskside, with a laugh. "If Sandy Pringle has the assurance to bring a lawsuit, I think we could soon let him see his mistake. Besides, what could he bring a lawsuit about ? I don't think you show your usual sense, my dear. Because my lord and me have found our son's son, and have killed the fatted calf for our grandbairn ? The fatted calf

is ours, and not Sandy Pringle's. He could scarcely make a case of that."

"No, indeed," said Mary; but she did not find any security in Lady Eskside's triumphant argument. Val had been out on one of his expeditions with his grandmother, in which he had won all hearts, and now was in the wood making the air ring with shouts, and letting out the confined exuberance of his spirits in every mode of noise and mischief possible to a child of his age. "That's the boy," said Lady Eskside, leaning from the open window to listen. "You may be sure he's on the rampage, as Marg'ret Harding says." The smile upon the old lady's face went to Mary's heart; there was the foolishness of love in it, as there was the foolishness of triumphant security in her reasoning. She was not troubled by the problem of this little creature so strangely thrown upon her hands, nor even by the twofold life, which she wondered at. People do not analyse the characters of their children, but accept them—often with a mingling of wonder at their peculiarities, and frank unconsciousness of any cause for their peculiarities, which is very strange to the beholder. Lady Eskside took pride in Val's versatility, even while it occasioned her some delighted wonder; but she did not trouble herself by any speculations as to the qualities that produced it, or the results to which it might lead.

Thus things went on for some years, and the country-side, as Willie Maitland predicted, partially forgot the story. The boy grew tall and strong, a favourite in society, and not unpopular among the rougher public of his own age and kind, who, indeed, were chiefly represented to Val by the Pringle boys. The Pringles continued to keep possession of the Hewan partly because

the children liked it, partly because the father still cherished in his secret soul some hope of finding out the fraud which he believed was being perpetrated against his rights and his boy's; and as the cottage was within easy reach of Edinburgh, some member of the family was almost always there. Sometimes it was the mother, with Violet and the little ones, sometimes the boys alone, walking out in a dusty merry party, on a holiday, for any diversion that happened to be in season. They came for skating in winter, for fishing in spring and autumn—for the Esk above the Hewan was sweet, and free from all poisonous paper-mills. And as they were undoubtedly relations, though in a very distant degree, it was not within the possibilities of Scotch politeness to refuse the boys some share of the shooting, and it was in the company of Sandy and his stalwart brethren that young Val first fired a shot and missed a bird. Though Lord Eskside looked glum at the associations thus formed, and wondered more than ever what Sandy Pringle meant, it was impossible to keep his grandson from the company of the only boys within reach who were of his own class, or something approaching to it. He learnt all kinds of manly exercises from them or with them, and knew the way to the Hewan blindfold by night or day, as well as he knew the way to his own chamber—a result which the parents on either side were far from desiring, but seemed helpless to prevent. One day in summer, when the boy was about twelve years old, he escaped, I don't know how, from the tutor who had been brought from Oxford for him, and whose life Val did his best to make a burden. He got away quite early in the morning, and escaped into the woods, with a double sense of pleasure in the thought that this



holiday was surreptitious, the conquest of his bow and his spear rather than lawful leisure granted by lawful authority. Val had had no breakfast, but he did not mind—he was free. He went away into the thickest of the woods and climbed a tree, and lay there among the branches in a cradle of boughs which he had long since found out, looking up at the breaks of blue sky through the leaves in the fresh early morning, before anything was astir but the birds. Val was great in birds, like most country boys. He listened to the universal twitter about him, amusing himself by identifying every separate note, till he tired of this tranquil pleasure. Then he looked out from his lofty retreat to count how many different kinds of trees he could see from that leafy throne; and then for a few minutes he lay back with his face to the sky and watched the white airy puffs of cloud which floated slowly across the blue with a dreamy enjoyment. But such meditative pleasures could not last very long. It was true he had the delightful thought that he had played truant, and had a whole day to himself, to fall back upon when he was tired, and this was always refreshing. But after a while it weighed heavy upon Val that he had nothing to do, and presently even the satisfaction of having stolen a march upon Mr Grinder scarcely bulked as large on his mind as the want of breakfast, which he saw no easy way of obtaining up here among the leaves. He did not venture to go to a gamekeeper's cottage for a share of the children's porridge, lest he should be led ignominiously back to Grinder and grammar. All at once a brilliant idea suggested itself—the Hewan! In a moment this notion was carried into practice; and Val, jumping down like a squirrel from his nest

in the trees, stole up the brae under the deepest trees, through the ferns all wet with dew, to the little airy platform on which the sun was shining, where the windows had just been opened and the day begun. One little figure sat perched on the low earthen dyke looking down the course of the Esk over tower and tree, and showing from far like a blue flower in her bright-coloured frock. "It's the flag," said Val at first to himself, as he toiled upward through the high ferns, keeping carefully away from the path; then he corrected this first notion, and said, "It's Sandy's cricket-cap;" and then he added to himself with animation, "It's Vi!"

It was Vi, grown older and a little bigger since the first time she came to the Hewan—a very stately, splendid, foolish, idle little person, full of laughter and gravity and baby fun and precocious wisdom. She was as fond of taking care of everybody as ever she had been, but she forgot herself oftener, being older, and was not perhaps quite so severe on peccadilloes as at six. She was a little alarmed when she saw the big thing struggling upward among the ferns, and wondered whether there might really be a bear or a wolf in the woods, as there used to be in ancient times. A lion it could not be, Violet reflected, for the weather was too cold in Scotland for lions. She did not like to run away, but she thanked Providence devoutly that none of "the children" were here, and wondered with a delightful thrill of excitement whether, if it should be a lion, it would do anything to her. Then there came a whistle which Violet knew, and looking down through the bushes with a pleasant sense of safety, she recognised the wayfarer. "Oh, is it you?" she cried, calling to him from the top of her fortress; "I thought it was a bear." "Ay, it's me. There

are no bears nowadays. "Who has come?" said Val, laconic and *sans cérémonie*, as is the use of children, as he panted upwards to the embankment, and putting his foot in a crevice swung himself up with the aid of a tree. "You will break your neck," said little Vi, with great gravity; "how can you do such things, you foolish boys?—nobody has come but me."

"Nobody but you!" said Val, with a whistle of surprise and half regret. Then he added with animation, "I'm awfully hungry; give us some breakfast, Vi. I have run off from Grinder, and I don't mean to go home till night. You can't think how jolly it is in the woods when there's nobody to stop you, and you have everything your own way."

"Oh, Val!" cried Violet, not knowing how to express the tumult of her feelings. She could not approve of such wickedness, but yet "playing truant" bore a glorious sound about it. She had heard the words from fraternal lips, mingled with sighs of envy. Sandy and the rest had never gone so far as to play truant that she knew of; but the words suggested endless rambles, woods and streams and wild flowers, and everything that stirs a child's imagination; and it was the flush of June, when the woods are at their warmest and richest, and Vi was all alone at the Hewan, hoping for nothing better than a story from old Jean Moffatt to beguile the endless summer day. Her eyes lighted up with excitement and curiosity. "Oh, Val! if they find you what will they do to you?" she cried with awe; "and where will you go, and what will you play at?" she added, eager interest following close upon terror. There was not a soul visible about the Hewan in the morning sunshine. Old Jean had gone away to her own quarters on the other side of the house, after

putting Violet's breakfast upon the table in the little parlour—and was busy with her beloved Grumphy, out of sight and hearing. The innocent doors and windows stood wide open; the child, in her blue frock, musing on the dyke in childish dreaminess, had forgotten all about her breakfast. Absolute solitude, absolute stillness, infinitely more deep than that of the forest, which indeed was full of chatter and movement, and inarticulate gay society, was about this silent sunny place. The bold brown boy, with his curls pushed off his forehead, his cheeks glowing, his dress stained with the moss and ferns and morning dew, and his young bosom panting with exertion, looked the very emblem of Adventure and outdoor enterprise—the young reiver born to carry peace and quiet away.

"I'm awfully hungry," was Val's only response. "Vi, have you had your breakfast? I think I could eat you."

"To be sure I had forgotten my breakfast," said Violet, tranquilly; "you are always so hungry, you boys. Come in, there's sure to be plenty for both of us;" and she led the way in with a certain bustle of hospitality. There was a little coffee and a great deal of fresh milk on the table (for old Jean by this time had attained in a kind of vicarious way to the summit of earthly delight, and had, if not her own, yet Mrs Pringle's cow to care for, and made her butter, and dispensed the milk to the children with a lavish hand)—with two little bantam's eggs in a white napkin, and fresh scones, and fresh butter, and jam and marmalade in abundance. Val made a very rueful face at the bantam's eggs.

"Is that the kind of things girls eat?" he said; "they're only a mouthful—I should like a dozen."

"You may have one," said Vi,



graciously. "It's my own little white bantam, and they're always saved for me; but if you're so hungry, I'll call Jean—or I'll go myself, and see what's in the larder.

"That is best," said Val; "it's nice to be by ourselves, just you and me. Don't call Jean; she might tell the gamekeeper, and the gamekeeper would tell Harding, and somebody would be sent after me. You go to the larder, Vi; and I'll tell you when you come back what we'll do."

Violet ran, swift as her little feet could carry her, and came back laden with all the riches the larder contained, the chief article of which was a chicken pie, old Mrs Moffatt's state dish, which had been prepared for the arrival of Mr and Mrs Pringle, who were expected in the afternoon. Vi either forgot, or did not know, the august purpose of this lordly dish: and when were there ever bounds to a child's hospitality when thus left free to entertain an unexpected visitor? She had some of the pie herself, neglecting her little eggs, in compliment to Valentine, who plunged into it, so to speak, body and soul; and they made the heartiest of meals together, with a genuine enjoyment which might have filled an epicure with envy.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said Val, with his mouth full; "we'll go away down by the water-side as far as the linn—were you ever as far as the linn? There's plenty of primroses there still, if you want them, and I might get you a bird's nest if you like, though the eggs are all over; and I'll take one of Sandy's rods, and perhaps we'll get some fish; and we can light a fire and roast potatoes: you can't think how jolly it will be——"

"We?" said Violet, her brown eyes all one glow of brilliant wonder and delight; "do you mean me too?"

"Of course I mean you too—you are the best of them all," said Val, enthusiastic after his pie; "you never sneak, nor whinge, nor say you're tired, like other girls. Run and get your hat; two is far better fun than one—though it's very jolly," he added, not to elate her too much—"all by yourself among the woods. But stop a minute, let's think all we'll take; if we stay all day we'll get hungry, and you can't always catch fish when you want to. Where's a basket?—I think we'd better have the pie."

A cold shiver came over Violet as she asked herself what old Jean would say; but the virtue of hospitality was too strong in her small bosom to permit any objection to her guest's proposal. "After all, it's papa's and mamma's, not old Jean's—it's not like stealing," Vi said to herself. So the pie was put into the basket, and some cheese from the larder, and some scones, and biscuits, and oatcake; the jam Vi objected to, tidiness here outdoing even hospitality. "The jam always upsets, and there's a mess," she said, with a little *moue* of disgust, remembering past experiences; therefore the jam was left behind. Valentine shouldered the basket manfully when all was packed. "You can bring it home full of primroses," he said, a suggestion which filled up the silent transport in Violet's mind. Had it really arrived to her, who was only a girl, nothing more, to "play truant" for a whole day in the woods? the thought was almost too ecstatic—for you see Violet in all her little life had never done anything *very wicked* before, and her whole being thrilled with delightful expectation. Val put the basket down upon the dyke, pausing for one last deliberation upon all the circumstances before they made their start; while Violet, scarcely able to fathom his great

thoughts and advanced generalship, watched him eagerly, divining each word before he said it, with her glowing eyes.

"We shan't go by the road," said Val, meditatively, "for we might be seen. You don't mind the ferns being a little damp, do you, Vi? If you hold the basket till I get down I'll lift you over. But look here, haven't you got a cloak or something? Run and fetch your cloak—look sharp; I'll wait here till you come back."

Violet flew like the wind for her little blue cloak, which, by good luck, was waterproof, before she plunged down with her leader into the wet ferns. Poor little Vi! that first plunge was rather disheartening, after all her delightful anticipations. The ferns were almost as tall as she was; and her little varnished shoes, her cotton stockings and frock, were small protection from the wet. Excitement kept her up for some time; but when her companion, far in advance of her, called loudly to Vi to come on, I think nothing but the dread of being taunted with cowardice ever after, and shut out from further participation in such expeditions, kept the child from breaking down. She held out valiantly, however, and after various adventures—one of which consisted in a scramble up to Val's favourite seat among the high branches, whither he half dragged, half carried her, leaving the basket at the foot of the tree—they reached the bank on the side of the water where the sun shone, and dried her wet skirts and shoes. Here the true delight of the truants began. "Take off your shoes and stockings, and I'll put them in the sun to dry," said Val, who, in his rough way, took care of her; and Violet had never known any sensation so delightful as the touch of the warm, mossy, velvet grass upon her small

bare feet, except the other sensation of feeling the warm shallow water ripple over them, as Val helped her out by the stepping-stones to the great boulders at the side of the linn. The opposite bank was one waving mass of foliage, in all the tender tints of the early summer; whilst on that along which the children had been strolling the trees retired a little, to leave a lovely grassy knoll, with an edge of golden sand and sparkling pebbles. Through this green world the Esk ran, fretted by the opposition of the rocks, foaming over them so close by Violet's side that, perched upon her boulder, she could put her hand into the foaming current, and feel it rush in silken violence, warm and strong, carrying away with lightning speed the flowers she dropped into it—till her own childish head grew giddy, and she felt all but whirled away herself, notwithstanding that she sat securely in an arm-chair of rock, where her guardian had placed her. Vi would have been happy, beyond words to tell, thus seated almost in the middle of the stream, with the water rushing and foaming, the leaves shining and rustling, the whole universe full of nothing but melodious storms of soft sound—loud, yet soft, penetrating heart and soul—had it not been for the freaks of that wild guardian, who would perch himself on the topmost point of the boulder on one foot, with the other extended over the rushing linn; or jump the chasm back and forward with shouts of joyous laughter, indifferent to all her remonstrances, which, indeed, he did not hear in the roar of the waterfall. But the fearful joy was sweet, though mixed with panic indescribable. "Oh, Val, if you had fallen in!" she cried, half hysterical with fright and pleasure, when they got back in safety to the



grassy bank. I suspect Val was rather glad to be back too in safety, though he could not restrain the masculine impulse of showing his prowess, and dazzling and frightening the small woman who furnished the most appreciative audience Val had ever yet encountered in his short life.

I need not attempt to describe the consternation which filled all bosoms in the two houses from which the truants had fled, when their absence was discovered. The Pringles arrived to find their chicken pie gone, and their daughter, and Lady Eskside white with terror, consulting with old Jean Moffatt at the cottage door. Jean was not deeply alarmed, and could not restrain her sense of the joke, the ravaged larder, and the prudent provision of the runaways; but poor Lady Eskside did not see the joke. "How can we tell the children alone did it?" she cried, with terrible thoughts in her mind of some gipsy rescue—some wild attempt of the boy's mother to take him away again. She was ghastly with fear as she examined the marks on the dyke where the culprits had scrambled over. "No bairn ever did that," cried the old lady, infecting Mr Pringle at least with her terrors. Lord Eskside and Harding and the gamekeepers were dispersed over the woods in all directions, searching for the lost children, and the old lady was on her way to the lower part of the stream, though all agreed it was almost impossible that little Vi could have walked so far as the linn, the most dangerous spot on Esk. "Would you like to come with me?" my lady said with white lips to Mrs Pringle, whose steady bosom, accustomed to the vagaries of seven boys, took less alarm, but who was sufficiently annoyed and anxious to accept the offer. Mr Pringle got over the dyke in the traces of

the fugitives, to follow their route to the same spot, and thus all was excitement and alarm in the peaceful place. "It is not the linn I fear—it is those wild folk," cried poor Lady Eskside in the misery of her suspense, forgetting that it was her adversary's wife who was also her fellow-sufferer. But good Mrs Pringle was nobody's adversary, and had long ago given up all thought of the Eskside lordship. She received this agitated confidence calmly. "They could have no reason to carry off my little Vi," she said, with unanswerable good sense. The two ladies drove down the other side of the hill to the water-side, a little below the linn, and leaving the carriage, walked up the stream—one of them at least with such tortures of anxiety in her breast, as the mother of an only child alone can know. Mrs Pringle was a little uneasy too, but her boys had been in so many scrapes, out of which they had scrambled with perfect safety, that her feelings were softened by long usage. At the linn some traces were visible, which still further consoled Violet's mother, but did not affect Lady Eskside—Violet's little handkerchief to wit, very wet, rather dirty, and full of primroses. "They have been playing here," said the more composed mother. "*She* has been here," cried the old lady, "but oh, my boy! my boy!"

"I see something among the trees yonder," cried Mrs Pringle, running on. Lady Eskside was over sixty, but she ran too, lighter of foot than her younger companion, and inspired with fears impossible to the other. The sun had set by this time, but the light had not waned—it had only changed its character, as the light of a long summer twilight in Scotland changes, magically, into a something which is not day, but as clear as day, sweeter and paler—a

visionary light in which spirits might walk abroad, and all sweet visions become possible. Hurrying through this tender, pale illumination of the woodland world about them, the two ladies came suddenly upon a scene which neither of them, I think, ever forgot. It was like a tender travesty, half touching half comic, of some maturer tale. Between two great trees lay a little glade of the softest mossy grass, with all kinds of brown velvet touches of colour breaking its soft green; vast beech-boughs stretching over it like a canopy, and a gleam of the river just visible. Over the foreground were scattered the remains of a meal, the central point of which—the dish which had once been a pie—caught Mrs Pringle's rueful gaze at once. A mass of half faded primroses, mixed with the pretty though scentless blue violet which grows along with them, lay dropped about in all directions, having apparently been crazily propped up as an ornament to the rustic dinner table. Against the further tree were the little runaways—Violet huddled up in her blue cloak, with nothing of her visible but her little head slightly thrown back, leaning half on the tree, half on her companion, who, supporting himself against the trunk, gave her a loyal shoulder to rest upon. The little girl had cried herself to sleep—tears were still upon her long eyelashes, and the little pouting rose-mouth was drawn down at the corners. But Valentine was not sleeping. He was pondering terrible thoughts under his knitted brows. How he

was ever to get home—how he was ever to get *her* home! The boy was chilled and depressed and worn out, and awful anticipations were in his mind. What would happen if they had to stay there all night through the midnight darkness, among the stirrings of the mysterious woods? Val knew what strange sounds the woods make when it is dark, and you are alone in them—and a whole night! His mind was too much confused to hear the soft steps of the two ladies who stood behind the other big beech, looking, without a word, at this pretty scene—Lady Eskside, for her part, too much overpowered by the sudden sense of relief to be able to speak. I am not sure that a momentary regret over her chicken pie did not make itself felt in Mrs Pringle's soul; but she, too, paused with a little emotion to look at the unconscious baby-pair, leaning against each other in mutual support; the little woman overwhelmed with remorse and fatigue, the little man moody and penitent over the dregs of the feast, and the wild career of pleasure past. But just then there came a crash of branches, and louder steps resounding down the brae among the ferns, which made Val's face light up with hope and shame, and woke little Violet from her momentary oblivion. Lord Eskside's party of beaters, and Mr Pringle, solitary but vigorous, all converged at the same moment upon this spot. "Here, my lord," said Willie Maitland's hearty voice, with laughter that made the woods ring—"here are your babes in the wood."

## CHAPTER XII.

The exploit of the Babes in the Wood, as Willie Maitland called it, was one of the last freaks which Valentine played in his childhood

by Eskside. Mr Grinder, who was from Oxford, a cultured and dainty young Don, was recognised to be no fit tutor for a child who preferred



the woods to the classics, and could not construe a bit of Greek decently to save his life. What agonies Mr Grinder went through while his term of office lasted I will not attempt to describe. He was a young man of fine mind—one of the finest minds of his day, and that was saying a great deal. He loved pictures and fine furniture and dainty decorations as well as Richard Ross did, though perhaps he was not quite so learned; and when he first saw the great green cabinets in the drawing-room, could barely say the common civilities to Lady Eskside before he went on his knees to adore the Vernis-Martin. It may be supposed how little this dainty personage had in common with the boy, always carrying an atmosphere of fresh air about him, his pockets bulged out with unknown implements, his boots often clogged with mud, and his hands not always clean, whom it seemed a kind of desecration to introduce, all rustic and noisy, into the shadowy world of the Greek drama. Mr Grinder, I am afraid, had looked with lenient eye upon his pupil's absence on that June day. He had not reported the truant, but reconciled himself easily to the want of him; and it was only when the day was almost over that he had taken fright at the boy's prolonged absence. Lady Eskside could not forgive him the panic he had caused her, and as soon as the most exquisite politeness and delicate pretences of regret made it possible, Mr Grinder and his knick-nacks were got rid of; and a hard-working student from Edinburgh College, toiling mightily to make his way into the Scotch Church, and indifferent what labours he went through to attain this end, reigned in his stead. He was perhaps not so pleasant a person to have in the house, my lady allowed, but

far better for the boy, which was the first object. The new man cared nothing about the sanctity of the Greek drama, and perhaps did not know very much, if the truth were told. He turned Valentine on to Homer, and marched him through battle and tempest with some rough sense of the poetry, but very little delicacy about the grammar. But he kept his eye upon his pupil, and got a certain amount of work out of him, and prevented all such runaway expeditions, relieving the old people from their anxieties for the moment; for Val was not an easy boy to manage. He had two natures in him, as Lady Eskside said,—the one wild, adventurous, uncontrollable; the other more than ordinarily adaptable to social influences. But when a boy gets into his teens he is not so easily kept up to the pitch of drawing-room polish as is a dainty little gentleman of eight in velvet and lace. With the period of black jackets the histrionic power begins to wane—temporarily at least: and when Val at thirteen turned his back upon the Dowager Duchess, and fretted furiously against being taken to make calls, his terrified grandmother thought immediately, not of his age, but of the mother's blood, which made him clownish; and not only thought so herself, but was seized with a panic lest others should think so. It had made her proud to see how far her little Val surpassed in manners the Marquis of Hightowers; but it did not console her to think that Valentine now was no worse than his exalted neighbour. For, alas! the mother of Hightowers had as many quarterings on her shield as his august father, and the boy might be as great a lout as he liked without exciting any remark or suspicion; whereas poor Val could never be

free of possible criticism on the score of his mother's blood.

This troubled the serenity of his childhood, though Val himself did not know the reason why. His recollections of the earlier period of his life had grown very vague in those years. Val had been well disposed to be communicative on the subject when he came to Esk-side first. He had shown on many occasions a dangerous amount of interest and knowledge as to the economy of the travelling vans which sometimes passed through Lasswade with shows of various kinds, or basketmakers or tinkers; and once had followed one of them for miles along the road, and had been brought back again much disfigured with weeping, whimpering that his mammy must be there. But children are very quick to perceive when their recollections are not acceptable to the people about them, and still more easily led into other channels of thought; and as he had nothing near him to recall that chapter of his life to his mind, he gradually forgot it. There was still a vague light of familiarity and interest in his eyes if, by any chance, he came upon an encampment of gipsies, or the vans of a show, or even the travelling tramps upon the road. The boy, I think, came to be ashamed of this feeling of interest, and to divine that his early life was no credit to him, but rather something to be concealed, about the same time as he ceased to be the perfect little actor and social performer he had been in his first stage. He began to be conscious of himself, that most confusing and bewildering of experiences. This consciousness comes later or earlier, according to the constitution of the individual; but when it comes, it has always a confusing influence upon the young

mind and life. When one's self thrusts into sight, and insists upon filling up the foreground of the scene, it changes all natural rules of proportion and perspective. The child or the youth has to review everything around him over again to get it into keeping with this new phantom suddenly arisen, which does nothing but harass his mind, and puts him out in all his calculations. Me — how much has been said about it, philosophies based upon it, the whole heaven and earth founded on this atom; but there is nothing that bewilders the young soul so much as to see it surging up through the fair sunny matter-of-fact universe, and through the world of dreams, disturbing and disarranging everything. This change befell Valentine early. I think it began from that day in the woods, which was full of so many experiences. Even then he had been faintly conscious of himself — conscious of "showing off" to dazzle Violet on the linn — conscious of deceiving her as to their safety when she began to cry with fatigue and loneliness — and he, upon whom all the responsibility of the escapade lay, had to think how she was to be got home. In the chaotic bit of existence which followed, when Oxford, worsted, left the field, and Edinburgh, dauntless, came in, Valentine had a tough fight with this Frankenstein of himself, this creature which already had lived two lives, and possessed a vague confusing world of memories half worn out, yet not altogether extinct, alongside of his actual existence. I do not mean to pretend that the boy was a prodigy of reflectiveness, and brooded over these thoughts night and day; but yet there were times when they would come into his mind, taking all his baby grace away from him,



and all the security and power of unconsciousness.† Lady Eskside did not know what had come over her boy. She discussed it eagerly with her old lord, who tried in vain to dismiss the subject. "He's at the uncouth age, that's all," said Lord Eskside. "Oh, I hope it is not his mother's blood!" said the old lady. And thus the delightful day of playing truant in the woods was the primary cause of a wonderful revolution in Val's affairs. The grandfather and grandmother made up their minds to deny themselves, and send him to school.

The incident of the Babes in the Wood scarcely made less impression on the side of the other culprit. Mrs Pringle took her little daughter home, not without some emotion—for what mother can resist the delighted look of absolute security which comes to the face even of a naughty child, when, out of unimaginable danger and tragic desolation, it suddenly beholds the Deliverer appear, the parent in whom Providence and Power and Supreme Capacity are conjoined? But she was half amused at the same time; and indeed the whole household at the Hewan regarded Vi's escapade with more amusement than alarm. "Oh, Miss Violet, to tak' the pie—that was a' I had for your papa's and mamma's dinner!" said old Jean. "They maun be content with ham and eggs noo, for I've naething else in the hoose. My larder's sweepit clean," she added, when Violet had been carried off to have her damp and draggled garments changed. "Cheese and biscuits and everything there was: my word, but yon laddie maun have a good stomach! You wouldna think to bring the pie-dish back?"

"Indeed, we were too thankful,"

said Mrs Pringle, "to find the bairns——"

"Oh, the bairns! bless you, there was never ony fear o' the bairns; but my dish was new, or as good as new. I'll give little Johnny at the farm a penny to gang and look for't. There was three fine fat young chickens, no' to speak of eggs and a' the seasoning. If that laddie's no' ill the morn he maun be an ostridge, or whatever ye ca' the muckle bird ye get the feathers from; and a' the morning's milk and the new bread I laid in for your suppers! Just an ostridge! I wish the laddie nae harm, but he should have a sair head the morn, and a good licking, if he gets what he deserves."

"Alexander," said Mrs Pringle, an hour or two later, when she, with a warm shawl on, took a seat for ten minutes on the earthen dyke to keep her husband company while he smoked his cigar. The night was still clear, and pale with the lingering of the light, though it was past ten o'clock; and the western sky shone with such silvery tints of celestial hue, sublime visions of colour, free of all earthly crudeness, as are never visible save in a northern summer. "Alexander, Sandy's wife, if he lives to have one, will never be Lady Eskside; but I would not wonder if you and me had more interest in that title than any daughter-in-law could give us. We'll see what time may bring forth."

"You mean you'll have it yourself? I am sure I hope so, one day, my dear," said Mr Pringle, complacently: "not meaning any harm to Dick Ross; but his was never a very strong life."

"I am not meaning myself," said Mrs Pringle, provoked. "How obtuse you are, you men! Neither you nor Sandy will ever have the

lordship, you may take my word for that."

"And what do I care then who is my lady?" said the heavy husband. "I don't really see, my dear, why you should be so very decided against your husband and son. One would think you would be more likely to take our side."

Mrs Pringle shrugged her shoulders slightly, and drew her shawl closer round her. What was the use of throwing away her pearls—her higher insight? She changed the subject; and by and by, having no consolation of a cigar, and finding the lovely twilight chilly, though it was so beautiful, she went in, and went up-stairs to the little room in the roof where Violet lay warm and cosy, with her bright eyes still open, and turned to the soft clear sky of which her attic window was full. "Oh, mamma, was it very, very wicked to go?" said Violet. Her mother stooped to kiss the little tearful face.

"We'll say no more about it, Vi—but you must never play truant again."

"Never!" cried Vi, with a half sob which prolonged the word, and made it echo through the tiny chamber. Alas, there was more than penitence in the word; there was regret, there was the ghost of a delight made doubly precious by trouble and terror. Oh, no, never again! but what had all Violet's discreet and exemplary life—a life irreproachable and full of every (nursery) virtue—to show which could compare with the transport, and terror, and misery, and sweetness, of that one never-to-be-repeated day?

Vi had a great deal to bear afterwards, when the boys heard the story, and held over her the recollection of the "day she played truant," with all that delight in torture which is natural to their kind.

But with all this they could not take from her the memory of it, which grew dearer in proportion as she buried it in her own small bosom. The running of the water, the rustling of the leaves, the solemn drowse of noon in the full sunshine, the soft velvet rush of the foaming linn over the little fingers with which she tried to stop its torrent, and all the stirs and movements among the trees, peopled the child's recollection for many a day. Seated at a dull window in Moray Place, looking out upon the stiff garden with its shrubs—public property, and unlovely as public property generally is—Violet could see once more her bold companion leaping from one boulder to another, with the furious Esk underneath, and feel again a delicious thrill of visionary terror. She had learned more about "the country," about woods and wilds, and birds and squirrels, and about the sensations of explorers in a new discovered land, than anything else could have taught her. "I too in Arcadia," she could have said: her one day of playing truant was the possession out of which she drew most enjoyment; and I leave the gentle reader to imagine, as Violet grew older, whether she could dismiss the partner of this celestial piece of wickedness into the mere common region of indifference, and leave him there undistinguished by any preference. She was always Val's defender afterwards, when any discussion of his merits arose among the boys; and what was more remarkable still, Mrs Pringle became Val's warm partisan and supporter, dismissing almost with indignation any suggestion which might be made to his disfavour. She was impatient of what she called her husband's "whimsey" about his heirship. "It is just a piece of folly," she would say with



some heat. "Are the Esksides fools to take up a false heir? or what motive could they have? Your father is a very clever man, and has a great deal of sense in a general way. But, boys, don't you build any hopes upon this, for it's just nonsense. You may be sure they are not the kind of folk to commit themselves, or expose the property to certain waste and destruction, with an impostor for an heir——" That he should have so important a deserter from his standard filled Mr Pringle with surprise. He was justified in thinking that it would have been natural that, right or wrong, she should have placed herself on her own boy's side. But Mrs Pringle was a woman who was given to an opinion of her own, and was not to be persuaded out of it when once formed upon sufficient cause.

And thus the soft-paced time went on, gently, dallying with the children, spinning out long tranquil days for them, and years that seemed as

if they would never be over, as he does not do with their elders. They grew up slowly like the grass, which never shows itself in the act of growing, but is, while yet we are unaware of it. The happiest of all life's various periods—not only to the younglings, who are unconscious of it, but also to the fathers and mothers, who sometimes have an inkling of the truth—it looks long while it is in progress, thank heaven—though after, I suppose, when it is over, and the birds are out of the nest, it is like everything else in life, as short to look back upon as a tale that is told. But in the mean time there is little more to be said than that the children grew. And by and by Rosseraig House fell into sudden shadow, as if the sun had gone behind a cloud, and the voices in it died down into subdued sounds of old people's voices, as had been before the child came to it, turning everything topsy-turvy. Val had been sent to school.

## INTERNATIONAL VANITIES.

## NO. IV.—DECORATIONS.

THE gold chain that Pharaoh put on to Joseph is the earliest "decoration" of which history distinctly speaks; yet, judging from what we now know of human nature, it is reasonable to suppose that marks of personal distinction were invented long before the time of Potiphar. It is, however, scarcely worth our while to speculate as to the nature of the exterior tokens of rank or merit which may possibly have been employed by the sovereigns or the patriarchs who preceded Jacob; for, even if we content ourselves with adopting the chain in question as the starting-point of our present subject, it still presents a reasonable antiquity, and opens a capacious field for curious inquiry. But here we need not seek either to trace out the beginnings of the institution before the Deluge, or to follow up its growth amongst the ancients; we do not want to talk of crowns or diadems of linen, laurel, oak, or myrtle, or of the rings of Roman knights; we can even omit oriental turbans and pelisses, Chinese buttons, swords of honour, and the scalps and bear's claw collars with which an Indian brave adorns himself. We can leave all these shapes of vanity alone, because they are outside our immediate study; they have doubtless been as tempting to their wearers as "stars and garters" now are to our fellow Europeans; but they have all been purely local; they have formed no part of the international development of pride; and, consequently, they cannot be included in the enumeration of its main elements which we are making here.

The present meaning of the word decoration is limited, as everybody

knows, to ribbons, stars, and crosses; but, though its sense has become so restricted, though all the various adornments which men have worn successively, as indications of personal value or of a monarch's favour, are now replaced by this one badge, the use and influence of such signs have not diminished; on the contrary, they have now acquired a universal character of which we have never seen the like before, and which gives to them an importance of which we find no trace in former usages of the same character. The reason is that, instead of being confined to a favoured few, decorations are now accessible to everybody, and that the competition for them has increased in proportion with the facility of obtaining them. It should also be remarked, that as the idea of recompensing merit by this means has grown and spread, so the quantity of merit to be recompensed has simultaneously increased; there is vastly more of it upon earth in our time than in former ages, not perhaps in the strict old meaning which once limited the word to military and moral virtues only, but in the new elastic sense which the rush of science, literature, and industry has recently created, especially during the present century. The constantly growing number of claimants for reward has necessitated a corresponding multiplication of available rewards. Of course, all this is not superb in principle; but it is fact. In theory it would be very grand to see people practise excellence for nothing, to reach a period of the world's life when the now deceptive phrase, "virtue is its own reward," would stand out as a glori-



ous truth ; to live in a society in which the offer of remuneration for good conduct would be regarded as an insult. But things in our time go just the other way ; a good many of us do our duty simply because it pays well to be virtuous : so long therefore as the desire to earn prizes stands foremost amongst our springs of action, it would be altogether nonsense to suppress the prizes. And this argument applies in every land ; for, though the main development of the prizes known as decorations has thus far occurred upon the Continent, the use of them is spreading rapidly into other longitudes, and made its first step in England when the Bath was opened to civilians. We English would do well not to scoff at it too violently, for it is probable that we shall follow some day the example of our neighbours in the matter. Twenty years ago a beard was a loathsome object to an Englishman ; he shrank from it with contemptuous disgust ; it was only fit for "filthy foreigners : " then happened a certain war ; our soldiers found it difficult to shave, and came home with hair ; the nation copied them ; and, though the treaty which wound up the war has disappeared, as treaties sometimes do, the beards that the war provoked have grown into solid British customs. We may expect that in some such fashion decorations will jump one day into use amongst us, not perhaps to-morrow or just yet, but hereafter ; so let us moderate our scorn of those who, in other countries, are setting us an example which, whatever we may think about it now, we are doubtless destined to ultimately follow.

But this very universality of orders supplies one more example of the unvarying certainty with which everything tends to vanity ; their history shows us that even such origins as hard fighting, devotion to the Church,

and sick-nursing, conduce, like all else, to this one inevitable result. Orders began with charity, piety, and battle : they terminate in a button-hole ! The contrast between effect and cause does seem very violent, but it disappears directly we remember that, as "all roads lead to Rome," so do all roads lead to vanity. The monkish, chivalric, half-legendary knights of eight hundred years ago are for the most part represented now by highly respectable gentlemen in black coats or uniforms, who wear special jewellery at Continental evening parties. The knights would be surprised if they could contemplate their successors ; they might even be grievously offended at the sight : but the successors would not hesitate for that, and would continue to regard themselves as serious real chevaliers, without caring for the opinion of their ancestors thereon. Yet those ancestors are worth consulting, for they were the inventors of the whole thing, and had fancies of their own as to what a knight should be,—fancies which certainly did not correspond with present notions on the subject, and which, indeed, we should find it a little awkward to realise in these days. For this reason we may as well begin the story at the beginning ; otherwise we should be unable to clearly see how the institution has gradually changed, and how such commencements should have been followed by such an end. The tale will show us that orders have presented three separate aspects : first came the monastic military brotherhoods ; then the great aristocratic knighthoods, limited to a favoured few ; and, finally, the present purely remunerative and decorative system, open to all the world. The two latter stages merge into each other, and are not separated by any certain line ; but the former stands alone in history, and cannot possibly be mistaken for

or confounded with anything else whatever.

There are grave old chroniclers who proclaim that the Order of the Holy Sepulchre was the first established, and that it was devised in the year 69 by St James the Apostle, Bishop of Jerusalem. Others, after discussing this statement critically, after calling our attention to the absence of all allusion to it in the Acts, assert triumphantly that St James did nothing of the kind, and that the real authentic originator of chivalry was John, King of Ethiopia, who started an Order of St Anthony in 370. This second group of authors is so certain of its facts that it goes on to tell us how John's knights were dressed. We learn that they wore black, with a blue cross edged with gold, and that their black banner bore a lion holding a crucifix in his paws. A third school urges that this Ethiopian story is all imagination, that Clovis was the true inventor, that he created the order of the Sainte Ampoule to commemorate his baptism in 496, and that his example was at once followed by Lisoye de Montmorenci, who was christened with him, and who, to testify his watchfulness and his fidelity to heaven and to Clovis, set up the knightly confraternity of the Dog and Cock, and took for his house the famous motto, "Dieu aide au premier baron chrétien." Then come the legends of the Round Table, and of the orders said to have been founded by Charles Martel, by Charlemagne, by Garcias of Navarre, and half a dozen others. Unfortunately stern history rejects all these pleasant fables, and declares that, according to probabilities, orders were unknown until the eleventh century. From that date, however, there is no doubt about them, for then began the strange romance of the Hospitallers of St

John, the half-intoxicating, half-sad-denying tale of the triumphs and the defeats, the wealth and misery, the pride and sorrow of the soldiers of the White Cross, ending, after eight hundred years of fierce fight and wild adventure, in a "decoration" of black moire! We all have read the story, but as some of us may have forgotten it, and as it is the starting-point of the entire subject, there may be utility in recalling its main details.

When Monstaser Billah was caliph of Egypt and Palestine, certain charitable merchants of Amalfi obtained from him permission to establish a refuge in Jerusalem for the use of Latin pilgrims. So these worthy Christians built two hospitals at their own cost in 1048, placed them under the invocation of St John the Almoner, and handed them over to Benedictine Monks, who undertook to tend the sick and to feed the poor. If we may judge by the results, they must have done much good, for thankful visitors gave gifts and aid to the young establishment, and it had become prosperous and solid when in 1099 the crusaders took the Holy City. Then down rained generous endowments for the faithful hospital. Godfrey de Bouillon gave to it the domain of Montboise in Brabant, and his followers imitated him so energetically, that, in a few years, it became possessed of manors' rights, and privileges in nearly all the countries of Europe. People were, in those days, particularly grateful; they did what we don't do now, for the rich offered not only lands and money, but personal service too; and many a hard-hitting Crusader became a nurse inside the walls of the hospital of St John. Then Gérard, the Rector, bethought himself that, having much money and many men, he ought to constitute his community into a regular



religious order, bound by the three vows. At the head of his new monks he received from the Patriarch of Jerusalem a black gown, with an eight-pointed white linen cross on the left breast; and in 1113 the Pope approved the organisation of the fraternity by a special Bull. Gérard died in 1118, and was succeeded by Raimond du Puy, a gentleman of Dauphiné, who, badly wounded at the taking of Jerusalem, had been so well cared for in the Hospital of St John, that he had stopped there out of gratitude. On the whole, however, he appears to have preferred soldiering to doctoring, and to have had no difficulty in persuading his fellow monks that they had better take up the sword again; so a fourth vow was added to poverty, chastity, and obedience, and "defence by arms of the Holy Faith" became an additional duty of the Hospitallers. Warriors of this sort of stuff, "faith inside and iron outside," as St Bernard put it, were likely to be useful; so King Baldwin eagerly accepted their proffered swords, the Pope gave them a constitution, and such was the origin of "Orders."

At least a hundred treatises on the Hospitallers have been published in various languages, but, notwithstanding the attraction of the subject, all of them are desperately heavy reading; the only one which is at all diverting is an English compilation by Major Porter, who has carried tremendous writing to a pitch which makes the reader forget the story in bewilderment at the style. He begins by saying of the order that "its career, like a meteor's flash, dazzles the page of history;" and then he tells us that the new Knights took a share in the

battle of Antioch, in order to "flesh their newly consecrated swords, and to win the first laurel of that chaplet which centuries of heroic warfare has since twined for their brows."

It does not seem easy to fill two volumes with this sort of English, but Major Porter has done it with such complete success, that one joyfully reverts to the heavy French of the Abbé de Vertot, who, at all events, tells the great story without converting it into a caricature. We learn from him that, after brave old Raimond died, the fighting got thicker every year, until the capitulation of Jerusalem in 1187, and that, meanwhile, all sorts of strange things happened to the order. One of the legends is, that Saladin having penetrated into the Holy City, in the disguise of a Syrian peasant, in order to examine the inside of the defences which his army was attacking from without, coolly went to lodge at the Hospital of St John. There, in order to test the knightly charity of which he had heard so much, he pretended to be very ill, and to be unable to eat at all. Finally, however, yielding to the solicitations of his nurses, who urged him to mention any sort of food that could excite his weakened appetite, he murmured, with an exhausted voice, "Yes, there is one thing that would please my fevered tongue; give me a fried steak off the Grand-Master's charger." The animal was immediately ordered to be slaughtered, but Saladin, who had satisfied his curiosity, and who was not the man to cut up a good horse for nothing, then said that he had changed his mind, and that he would content himself with a chicken.

From Jerusalem the Knights withdrew to Margat, abandoning the hospital for ever,\* and in 1191 re-

\* The site of the building put up by the good Samaritans of Amalfi was transferred a few years ago to France, as a testimony of the Sultan's gratitude for her intervention in the war of 1854.

moved again to St Jean d'Acre. It was from about this time that dated the beginning of their quarrels with the Templars (who had been established in 1118): the red cross warriors, though they were rich themselves, grew jealous of the 19,000 manors which the Order of St John then possessed in Europe; the two communities soon got to blows; and it was not till the Pope had been appealed to, and had declared both wrong, that they left off killing one another. But, as soon as this first difficulty was smothered another one broke out with the Teutonic Order (which dated from 1190); fighting with various pagans went on, however, all the time, till, in 1242, the Korasmins came down from the Caspian steppes, routed the Christian armies at the battle of Gaza, and left only sixteen Hospitallers alive to seek shelter within the walls of Acre. Major Porter describes in the following remarkable words the condition of the Holy Land at this disagreeable moment: "Spread like so many locusts over the province, the Korasmins destroyed far and wide everything which fell within their grasp, and, wherever they turned their steps, a heartrending wail of distress and misery arose upon their fell track, which, like that of the Destroying Angel, showed the dark traces of their blasting power." Things went on in this way until the seventh crusade was over, when a lull took place in the battling with "the accursed Moslem," and Hospitallers and Templars profited by it to fight out their private quarrel between themselves. After a good deal of private combat and what we should now call "outpost engagements," the two Orders had a pitched battle in 1259; White had the best of it, and Red was so nearly blotted out that "*à peine resta-t-il un Tem-*

*plier pour porter au loin l'annonce d'un tel massacre.*" This could scarcely be called warring "for the defence of the Holy Faith;" but, in those times, gentlemen liked fighting so very much that they took it wherever they could find it, and were not at all particular about its object.

In 1287 began the last campaign which was to be fought in Palestine; the Saracens captured successively all the fortresses still remaining in Christian hands, and laid siege to Acre, the last foothold of the military Orders. Acre seems to have become a very wicked place at that day; its inhabitants carried luxury to such an outrageous height that, amongst other things, they positively had glass windows in their houses; the ladies of the town had become celebrated along the Mediterranean shores; and, generally, its reputation had grown so detestable, that the time for punishment had evidently arrived. The defence was long and gallant; the bearers of different coloured crosses had enough hard blows to give and take to satisfy even their large appetites; but, at last, on 18th May 1291, after 60,000 people had been slaughtered, the infidels got in, and Jean de Villiers, 21st Grand Master, was forced to embark for Cyprus with the few Hospitallers who remained unkilld. So ended the first part of the strange history of the Order of St John.

Henry of Lusignan, King of Cyprus, received the remnants of the Order with much affection: he gave them the town of Limisso for a residence; and there they called for men and money from their commanderies on the Continent. Ships were built, and the Knights began to try their hand at naval warfare against their old enemies; they took many prizes and much pillage; but, under the influence of the relatively easy life they had



begun to lead, their discipline became relaxed, their morals grew very loose, and most improper stories began to circulate about their doings. Chapters were held to check their practices; no Knight was permitted to have more than three horses, or to wear gold or silver ornaments, and strong penalties were enacted against debt; but these very edicts prove that the brave warriors had got a long way from their starting-point of "poverty, chastity, and obedience." Still, they faithfully carried out their fourth vow of warring against the infidel; for they rapidly acquired an almost complete mastery of the sea, drove the Egyptian galleys into port, and rendered navigation safe in the waters of the Levant, to the satisfaction of the Venetians and other traders. In 1303 they even tried a descent upon Palestine, but were driven back, and then turned their eyes on Rhodes, which, though a fief of the Greek Empire, possessed a local government which was in alliance with the Saracens. This latter motive was of course sufficient to justify the conquest of an island which was so well placed for operations against the East, and whose possession would give the Hospitallers an independent home. So they tried it, and after a good deal of uncertain fighting, captured the town of Rhodes on 13th April 1309, the legend being that several of them got inside the walls disguised as sheep, and then, throwing off their wool, opened the gates to their friends outside.

At the moment when the Hospitallers were thus getting up in the world again, their rivals of the Temple were violently suppressed by torture and burning alive, and their possessions were divided between the sovereigns of Europe and the Order of St John. The extra income thus obtained went to pay

for the rebuilding of the fortifications of Rhodes; but before the knights were ready, the Turks were down upon them, and tried to drive them out of their new home. The effort failed; and then came a period of tranquillity, during which the maritime power of the Order increased from year to year, and with it the commercial prosperity of Rhodes. Tempted by the new glory, and, perhaps, by the enormous wealth which the Order had now obtained, the noblest houses in Europe sent their sons to join its ranks; and, under the title of Knights of Rhodes, which it adopted about 1312, it became more powerful than ever. Then came the brilliant Grand-Mastership of Hélión de Villeneuve, who divided the Order into the seven "languages" of France, Provence, and Auvergne, Italy, Aragon, Germany, and England; who carried on hard fighting, built new hospitals, launched new galleys, and by his admirable management increased the revenues of the Corporation to a relatively enormous sum. It was in Villeneuve's time that Dieudonné de Gozon is said to have killed the famous dragon of Rhodes, after preparing himself for the combat, according to the well-known legend, by teaching his dogs and horse to attack a wooden dragon made on the model of the real one. In this way Gozon earned the title of "extincteur draconis," and, having been elected Grand Master after Villeneuve, did a tremendous deal of fighting against the Turks. So things went on till the middle of the fifteenth century, when Mahomet II. frightened Europe by the threat of "Constantinople first, then Rhodes." He realised the former half of this menace in 1453, and, after a succession of wars and truces with the Order, during which it once more got

frightfully into debt by the vast cost of its warlike preparations, he attempted to carry out the second part in 1480. But Pierre d'Aubusson, thirty-eighth Grand Master, was ready for him, and after 89 days of siege, the Turkish army was hopelessly defeated. This, however, was the last success of the Knights of Rhodes; in 1522 Solymán came against them with an immense force, and though that grand soldier Villiers de l'Isle Adam fought magnificently for six months, he had to capitulate at last, and to move the Order once more westward.

After hovering about the coast of Sicily for eight years, the homeless Knights obtained a grant of Malta from Charles V., and proceeded to re-establish there the independent sovereignty which the Order had acquired at Rhodes two centuries before. Fortresses and ships were built, and vigorous fighting was carried on against the corsairs of the Barbary shore. But these successes put Solymán out of temper: he had imagined that the Order was destroyed when he turned it out of Rhodes, and he had the disappointment to discover, after forty years, that it was as powerful as ever. He hesitated, however, to besiege Malta; and he might perhaps have left the Knights alone, if they had not presumed to capture a rich galley laden with precious merchandise for the ladies of the harem. "*A cette annonce,*" says M. de Villeneuve-Bargemon, in his '*Monuments of the Grand-Masters,*' "*tout s'emeut dans Constantinople; les agas, les imans, le mufti même, crient vengeance; les odalisques embrassent les genoux de Soliman, et la guerre est résolue.*" A fleet of 193 ships, carrying 46,000 men, was sent against the Order; the corsairs of Tripoli and Tunis, led by Dragut, joined the Turks; and the

siege began in earnest. The furiousness of the fighting attained an unimaginable height, but the cruelties of both sides were more furious still. Amongst other remarkable inventions, La Valette cut off the heads of his Turkish prisoners, and fired them, as cannon balls, into the tent of the Moslem general. A corps of swimmers was formed by Admiral de Monte; its members, carrying a dagger in their teeth, floated about the harbour watching for Turks to kill. The resistance was so incredible that, after three months of vain attacks and prodigious slaughter, Moustapha, the Ottoman general (who seems to have been a very excitable person), flung himself three times off his horse with rage. At last, when there were left in Malta 600 combatants out of the 9000 who had formed the garrison at the commencement, when all hope was lost, a Spanish fleet suddenly arrived, and the Turks raised the siege, after losing 30,000 men. La Valette was saved, but, as he expected to be attacked again, he immediately planned and commenced to build new fortifications, and a new town which still bears his name. And then he died in all the glory of his fame, leaving behind him the reputation of "the first warrior, and the most pious knight of the sixteenth century."

With La Valette ended the successes of the order; after him the decadence began, not regularly and steadily, but by starts, with momentary reactions toward the old vigour. England had been lost to the Hospitallers since the Reformation; their British commanderies had been seized, their properties confiscated: but they were still rich enough elsewhere to be able to get on; and if internal disputes had not arisen between the knights of different "languages," the Order might



have continued prosperously for some time longer. But they got to blows between themselves, and their jealousies and bitternesses were fomented by the Inquisition and the Jesuits, who had successively established themselves in Malta, and by the Bishop, who was independent of the Order. The result of all this was that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Grand Master had lost the greater part of his authority in the island, and that his position as a sovereign was diminished in proportion to the influence acquired by the three other local Powers which were contending with him. Then, to make things worse, the Grand Masters quarrelled with the Pope, who began to seize the Italian commanderies, and to distribute them amongst his favourites. Fighting with the Moslem slowly ceased, partly because the Order had no more ships, partly because there were no more Moslems—none at least that wereworth attacking. The fraternity had outlived its usefulness; and when the Revolution came in France, and the French properties of the Order were, in their turn, taken from it, the Knights, in their extremity, were reduced to appeal to Russia. Then humiliations and disasters followed quickly: the schismatic emperor Paul became protector of the great brotherhood of Catholicity; and when, in 1798, Bonaparte, on his way to Egypt, stopped for a few days at Malta, took it, and drove out the Order, Paul appointed himself Grand Master, and the Pope approved his nomination. In the next year Paul was murdered, and Jean de Tommasi was selected in his place; he was the seventy-first and last chieftain of the Hospitallers. He had no home, and he died in Sicily in 1805. Then all sorts of wild schemes were suggested in order to restore the independence of the Order; but they

failed, and it was transferred quietly to Rome, where it still continues to describe itself as the Sovereign Order of the Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem, and to grant its decorations not only to well-born gentlemen, but to well-born ladies too. Some English Protestants started an "English language" for their own account in 1831; but the Roman managers of the relics of the real Order scoff at this usurpation, which reminds one of little children playing at king and queen. During the Franco-German war, two white crosses, duly bestowed by Rome, were to be seen in the Prussian ambulances on the breasts of two well-known English Catholics; and that was the last public appearance of the famous badge of Jerusalem, Rhodes, and Malta.

So ends this splendid story: it began in one hospital; it fitly finishes, for the moment, in another.

If all orders were like this one; if other knighthoods had such a past as this behind them; even if modern chivalry could point to any moral or charitable use in its extensive applications,—we might then regard present institutions with respect, and own that they serve another cause than vanity. But, alas! the grand legend of the eight-pointed cross is the only one of its sort; there is no other like it: it is the type of Orders, the starting-point of stars; but it has been a progenitor without descendants, a model without copies, a germ without reproduction. So, finding that no one has imitated it, that it stands alone in its traditions and its duties, it has silently permitted both to drop, and has assumed the usual nineteenth-century form of an ordinary "decoration."

After such a tale as this, it would be idle to narrate in detail the pale doings of the other religious Orders, for all their adventures were but

imitation. Still, a list of the imitators may as well be given, in order to show the spread of the new idea of associated knighthood which the Crusades provoked. The catalogue is a short one; but, despite its brevity, it contains two totally distinct elements—the Orders formed in the Holy Land, and those which were simultaneously established in Spain and Portugal. There were four of each: the Hospitallers, the Templars, the Teutonic Knights, and the Lazarists in Palestine; and the brotherhoods of Calatrava, Santiago, Alcantara, and Avis in the Peninsula. All these fraternities were established in order to help the weak and fight the Saracen; yet, notwithstanding this general similarity of object, each of them had a special character of its own which distinguished it from the others.

The Order of the Temple was started at Jerusalem in 1118 by nine French gentlemen, who united themselves in society, under the name of the Brothers of Christ, in order to protect pilgrims and defend the faith. They took the three monastic vows; and though they began most modestly in a little house which the second Baldwin gave them near the Temple, the usual donations soon arrived, and enabled them to form themselves into a regular military Order, the distinctive sign of which was the red cross on a white robe. They rapidly became famous, and acquired the reputation of possessing “the gentleness of lambs, the patience of hermits, and the courage of lions.” But they had the misfortune to grow rich, and, in consequence, jumped suddenly from humility and austerity to every sort of vainglory and licentiousness. Richard Cœur de Lion said of them at this epoch, that, “wishing to banish vices from his court, he had married pride to a Templar;” the

proverb, “boire comme un Templier,” got into circulation at the same time. The Order grew in wealth, in strength, in disorder, and in thirst for domination. Suddenly a coalition was formed against it; the Templars were condemned by both Pope and kings, and were extinguished in 1312 with even more than the usual cruelty of the period.

The fraternity of St Lazarus was founded in 1119, with the object of tending lepers. Its members wore a green cross, took to fighting like the others, and in the same way grew celebrated, and obtained lands and houses. Amongst the latter was a chateau close to Paris, which became the headquarters of the Order, and has given its name to the Rue St Lazare. The knights went on warring till they were turned out of Palestine; and then, as lepers were very scarce, and there was hardly anything for them to do, the Pope proposed to amalgamate them with the Hospitallers. This idea was not realised; but in 1572 the Lazarists were joined to the Order of St Maurice of Savoy, and the two together constitute the present Italian Order of St Maurice and St Lazare.

The Teutonic Order appears to date from 1190, when some gentlemen of Bremen and Lubeck formed a field-hospital with the sail of a ship, in order to nurse wounded German soldiers. Others joined them; and then grew up the idea of founding a third great Order, purely German, on the model of the Hospitallers and the Templars. The new knights bore the black cross on a white cloak, and acquired so much glory that the Emperor allowed them to add the Imperial Eagle to their arms, and St Louis granted them the *Fleur-de-Lys*. But though the order commenced in the Holy Land, it soon moved into Livonia; and its real reputation dates from its estab-



lishment as a sovereign power at Marienburg. In 1510 the Grand Master became Protestant, and the Catholic knights were turned out of their commanderies. The institution lingered on, however, till 1805, when it passed to Austria; and though it was abolished by Napoleon in 1809, it was reconstituted in 1834, and is now one of the Austrian Orders. It served to propagate the principle of fighting brotherhoods in Central and Northern Europe; but its influence was military and political rather than chivalric, and it did not contribute in the same degree as the Order of St John did to the gradual establishment of the idea of knightly association as a form of honour and distinction.

The Lusitanian and Iberian confraternities were directed against the Moors. The earliest of them was formed in 1143, when some Portuguese gentlemen joined in a league against the soldiers of Morocco; and, having received from Alfonso II. the castle and tower of Avis as a residence, took the title of Knights of Avis. The association was transformed in 1789, and became the Order of Military Merit of Portugal.

The three great military Orders of Spain come next in date. In 1158 the Moors of Andalusia announced that they were going to attack Calatrava, and the news frightened away the Templars, who then formed its garrison; they declared the place to be untenable, and abandoned it. Thereupon the King of Castille grew vexed, and, in his worry, published to the world that he would make a present of the town to anybody who would defend it. Two Cistercian monks accepted the proposal, and got leave to collect a regiment for the purpose. Such was the origin of the Order of Calatrava, which did good service against the Moors, grew very rich, and was

annexed to the Spanish Crown, in 1489, by Ferdinand the Catholic. It still exists.

Santiago dates from 1170. Its history is analogous to that of Calatrava. It is now the most important of the Spanish military Orders.

The Order of Alcantara is seven years younger. It began in 1177.

These four institutions have lived on through events and centuries. With the one exception of the Hospitallers, they are the most ancient of all present Orders. The reason of their durability evidently is, that the idea of chivalric association has fitted in with Spanish tendencies and Spanish character, and has consequently been sustained in the Peninsula, while it has died out, in its older forms, in most other countries. And yet there is nothing in the history of these four brotherhoods which can be compared with the glorious legend of the White Cross. They have supplied a home necessity, they have adapted themselves to a national disposition; but their action has been strictly limited to an outlying corner of the Continent. Never has their flag been seen or their cry been heard in battle beyond the frontiers of their own land. The whole world of six centuries ago echoed with the deeds of the Knights of Palestine. Their reputation was as international as that of the Knights of Spain was solely local; and yet the four Orders of the Peninsula are still extant, while of the four stately knight-hoods of the Holy Land, one only still maintains an unacknowledged and lingering existence. All Europe supplied the wearers of the black, white, red, and green crosses—they came from all its provinces without distinction; and it was perhaps precisely because they had no true home that they all have disappeared, while the purely Spanish banners of Santiago, Calatrava, and

Alcantara have never ceased to wave, because they appealed to the pride of one nation only, and that nation by far the proudest which history has known. For these motives we should feel no surprise either at the vigorous longevity of the Spanish military Orders, or at the disappearance of the other far grander associations which originally served as models for the Spanish knights.

The great aristocratic Orders—those which are limited to a small fixed number of decorations, and are accorded only to sovereigns or great nobles—form the second category; but though we can all see where that category begins, it is not very easy to determine where it ends. To take our own case as an example: everybody will admit that neither the Thistle nor St Patrick are equivalent to the Garter; and that, like a number of other most worthy knighthoods on the Continent, they are evidently not entitled to be included in the foremost rank. But, though we may think it rather harsh to leave them in the crowd of ordinary Orders, there is no other way of dealing with them, unless we create a new class on purpose for them, which would drag us on to an endless variety of other subdivisions. Counting strictly, without any pity, there are, in all Europe, only eight Orders which are indisputably entitled to stand by themselves in front. These are the Garter, the Seraphim of Sweden, the Annonciade of Savoy, the Golden Fleece, the Elephant of Denmark, St Andrew, the Black Eagle, and St Stephen. About these no doubt is possible; they are all immensely lofty. But really, with all their present splendour, their history is not remarkable; there is nothing in it that is worth learning, and very little that amuses. It has a use, however, for it is an important link

in the chain which stretches from 1113 to 1874, from the Hospital of St John to the Ladies' Order which the Shah of Persia so politely offered to the various queens he visited last summer. It helps to show us how we have slowly grown from a white linen cross to the enamels, gold, and diamonds of to-day; how time and progress have led us gradually from the badges of the soldiers of Holy Church to the decorations by which democratised honour is now offered as a bait to everybody who is worthy enough or lucky enough to win what are supposed to be its emblems.

Of the great chivalric institutions of to-day, the Garter and the Seraphim are the oldest: they are twins, for both saw the light in 1334; both occupy the highest place in European reverence; and if the Garter is admitted on the Continent to be the more glorious of the two, it is not because, as Selden urged, "it exceeds in majesty, honour, and fame, all chivalrous Orders in the world," but, in reality, because England is a bigger and a stronger country than Sweden, and because what belongs to the former inspires, consequently, more awe abroad than the latter is competent to provoke. Next to these patriarchs follows the Annonciade, another most illustrious fraternity, with two legends for its origin; it dates from 1362. The Golden Fleece comes fourth: it was set up in Bruges in 1429 by Philip III. of Burgundy; but it passed to Spain with the provinces of Flanders, and was transferred again to Austria in 1713 by the Emperor Charles VI., when he acquired the Low Countries. Spain, however, would not consent to lose it, and, after much wrangling, it was tacitly agreed that it should become the joint property of both the Spanish and Imperial Governments. The Elephant claims



to have come into existence in 1159, when a Danish Crusader having slain an elephant single-handed with his sword, Canute VI. is said to have established this very noble Order in memory of that remarkable event. But this story is not admitted by the annalists of chivalry; they allow the Order to date only from 1478. St Andrew of Russia and the Black Eagle are very modern: the former was established in 1698 by Peter the Great; and the latter in 1701, to commemorate the coronation of the first King of Prussia. St Stephen of Austria is still more recent; it was set up by Maria Theresa in 1764.

But though these eight majestic Orders are alone included in the first class, there are, as was said just now, several other knighthoods whose antiquity is as great and whose merit is almost as real as theirs. Though we group them here with the great mass of Orders of every kind, some of them deserve a special mention. St Hubert of Bavaria, which dates from 1444; the extinct "*Ordres du Roi*," in France, St Michael, St Louis, and the St Esprit; the Danebrog of Denmark, with its legend of a flag which fell miraculously from heaven in 1219, in the middle of a fierce battle which it helped the Danes to win; the Spanish Order of Montesa and the Christ of Portugal, which two replaced the Temple when it was extinguished in the Peninsula in 1315; the White Eagle, established in 1325 in Poland, but now absorbed by Russia; our own Bath;—all these are examples of Orders of this class which possess or have possessed much dignity, and there are several others like them. And, subsidiarily, there are the purely military decorations, such as St George of Russia and our Victoria Cross, which have a merit and a value of a special kind, and must

not be confounded with the mass of ribbons which constitute the third category.

This one category includes, at the present moment, nearly 120 Orders. The number fluctuates; for, though it is increased almost every year by the creation of new institutions, it is diminished, from time to time, by the absorption of independent states, and by the consequent suppression of the Orders belonging to those states. These two conflicting causes make it somewhat difficult to ascertain the exact number of Orders in existence on any given day. The books which have been published on the subject (and there are a good many of them, copied from each other, in all the languages of Europe) are all far behind the times; the only list which can be admitted as probably correct is the one furnished by the '*Almanach de Gotha*' for 1874; and even that one will doubtless become inexact before the year is out. It shows that on last New Year's Day 43 countries possessed Orders; of these countries 33 are in Europe, 4 in America (Brazil, Honduras, Venezuela, and Hawaii); 5 in Asia (Siam, Birmah, Persia, Cambodia, and China); and 1 in Africa (Tunis). These 43 countries dispose of 138 Orders, not including medals of any kind, or commemorative crosses. Furthermore, the states which have been recently suppressed (Naples, Hanover, Hesse, Mexico, Modena, Nassau, Parma, and Tuscany) possessed 23 others, all of which are at present in abeyance, and ought not to be worn by those who hold them. And it must be remembered that the 138 Orders now in force, represent very little more than half the total of all the Orders which have existed; for, without including any of the mythical or legendary brotherhoods, the special books present

catalogues which, though they vary somewhat between themselves, reach a general total of about 260 Orders, of which about 120 have become extinct. But, though these figures show the quantities in which Orders have disappeared, other figures indicate that they sprout up again even faster than they fade; for when we analyse the composition of the 138 existing Orders, we find that 86 of them have been created during the 19th century, that 23 were made in the 18th century, and that only 29 of them are anterior to the year 1700. Most of the old religious and strictly noble confraternities have vanished out of sight; but they have been replaced by modern institutions more in harmony with the spirit of the age. And when we look still closer into the subject, and examine the geographical distribution of all these Orders, we naturally find that, as the rush for them is everywhere the same, the development of their number has been everywhere alike, with one exception. That exception, strangely, is in France—in frivolous, vainglorious France—the very place where we should least expect to find it. While sturdy cross-despising England owns 7 Orders, Sweden 6, Russia 8, Bavaria 13, Austria 9, Prussia 11, Spain 10, Portugal 7, Italy 5, Wurtemberg 4, and little Denmark 2, France, alone of the real nations, has but *one*. Proportionately to their population, their power, or their pride, all other European states have gone on multiplying their ribbons; France contents herself with the single cross of Honour. And while most other countries have created special decorations for women (out of the 138 there are 13 for ladies only, and 4 others to which they are promiscuously admitted, making 17 in all, or twelve per cent of the entire number), France has declined to parti-

cipate in that pretty court and ball-room form of chivalry; and in the rare cases in which women have been considered worthy of it, they have been specially admitted into “the Legion,” whose cross is at this moment worn by Rosa Bonheur the painter, and Sœur Rosalie the Nun.

The Hospitallers, the Garter, and the Legion of Honour represent the three aspects which Orders have successively assumed; they are typical of the religious, the aristocratic, and the democratic forms of chivalry; no examples better illustrate those essential stages of the development of decorations. We have now reached the last of them, and it is by far the most interesting of the three, for it leads us straight into the actual situation of the question. The Legion of Honour was the starting-point of popularised Orders, the original of knighthood for the masses; all other similar institutions are mere copies from it. And it is not for this reason only that it must be regarded as a model; it possesses another rare peculiarity—it has retained its prestige. It has been squandered, it has been ill-bestowed, it has been cut into many shapes, to suit the political necessities of ever-changing Governments; and yet it has always held its ground as the foremost Order of the third category. This opinion may be denied by those indigenous enthusiasts who, in every country, proclaim that what their own land owns is superior to what any other land can offer; but its truth would become apparent if Europe could be polled upon the subject; for, just as the Athenians, when called upon to determine who were the two bravest men amongst them, voted, first, each one for himself, and then each one for Alcibiades—so each European, if he claimed the front rank for his own country's Order, would surely



give the second to the Legion of Honour. This instinctive preference is no consequence of antiquity, of historic glories, of national associations; the Legion has no such qualities; it is brought about by the universal consciousness that this Order has done thoroughly the work for which it was invented, and by the respect which we all involuntarily feel for duty well performed. Whether the duty be great or little does not affect the question. The fact that this particular duty is a very small one in no way diminishes the excellence of the means by which it is discharged. The object is to distribute honorific rewards to everybody who is supposed to merit them; and that, in its present extensive and elastic sense, is in no way more practically and satisfactorily attained than by the grant of the decoration of the Legion of Honour. In measuring a subject of such a nature, on which opinions are both relative and arbitrary, each of us unconsciously applies his own theories and his own prejudices. There is no common rule to guide us—no standard to invoke. The assertion that the whole principle of Orders is illogical and absurd in our actual state of civilisation, would be received by many people as an indisputable reality, by many more as an abominable injustice. Others, again, would say that truth lies half-way between these two extremes; that however much Orders may be in contradiction with certain of the principles and ideas which now guide our public life, they are in close accordance with others of these principles and ideas; that they correspond to one of the weak necessities of human nature; and especially, that, by habit and long usage, they have become a generally recognised and easy form of manifesting Governmental gratitude and national approbation. And if these

arguments possess—as indisputably they do—a certain value in their home bearings, it will be recognised that they assume still greater force in their international applications. This consideration brings us back to the special element of the subject which we are pursuing here.

Nations, like individuals, receive services from strangers, and, more than individuals, consider themselves bound to recognise those services. But nations, as a consequence of their royalty, cannot pay such debts as private persons do; they cannot offer an embroidered purse (even with nothing in it) as a recompense to ambassadors; they cannot give a dozen pairs of gloves to an allied general who has aided them to win a battle; they cannot present a bouquet of blush roses to a foreign judge who has been sent over to help to negotiate an extradition treaty; they cannot offer a bag of bon-bons or a pair of braces to the equerry of a king who visits them. It is true that usage authorises them, in such cases, to employ a service of Dresden china, a vase of malachite, or a curtain of Gobelins tapestry; but as these things cost many thousand pounds, they are employed only on rare occasions. Another solution has been invented, a cheap and satisfactory one, with which both giver and receiver are content, which is neither beneath the acceptance of a sovereign nor above the merits of the lowest citizen,—a solution which has the enormous merit of fully satisfying the recipient without any outlay for the donor. The gift thus employed is the only one of the kind which the world's ingenuity has thus far devised—the only one yet discovered which possesses the admirable quality of “costing little, but seeming very dear”—the only one which has found out the secret of amalgamating much vanity

with much dignity. A decoration unites all these rare characters ; it alone, of all the gifts which women or men can make, combines these contradictory attributions. But it attains them usually by means of a great variety in its own composition, so as to fit itself to all the shades and shapes of possible necessities. It is mainly to acquire this variety of adaptability to all sorts of exigencies that so many Orders have been created, each of them representing one of the many shades of honour, each of them possessing a certain well-recognised degree of value, each of them (except the very highest) subdivided into farther ranks within itself. By this means every large State has now at its disposal, in one of the degrees of one of its several Orders, the means of satisfying, with critical precision, all the claims which are addressed to it, whatever be the hierarchical position of the claimant, whatever be the nature of the obligation towards him, whatever be the measure of courtesy intended to be shown to him. And yet, though some nations require to have nearly a dozen Orders at their disposal for the due discharge of this delicately graduated service, France contrives to reach the same result with the sole aid of the five classes of the Legion of Honour.

Everywhere throughout the Continent there is the same demand for decorations ; and as vice and virtue have the reputation of existing in all countries in equal quantities, it may fairly be supposed that, proportionately to the population, the number of people who merit to be decorated is everywhere the same. But certain Governments are open-handed in the matter, while others are rather niggardly, so that the quantity of decorated citizens follows no universal rule. In France there are now about 52,000 men

who have the cross ; in Italy about as many ; in Spain the proportion must be larger still ; while in each of the great German States it is somewhat less. Not counting war-medals, it may be guessed that in all Europe one man in every three hundred possesses a decoration, though this in no way means that the three-hundredth part of the male population has in any way deserved a national reward. The number of *décorés* who have rendered any appreciable service to their country, though increasing, is still very limited ; the great mass of them get their cross, in every land, simply because they have spent twenty or thirty years in some inferior military or civil employment ; because they are ancient captains or worn-out mayors, or long-persisting members of an agricultural committee, or senior beadies of a province, or white-haired clerks in an office under Government, or because they are friends of a prefect or a minister. The small minority of really meritorious knights is made up of soldiers who have won their cross in action, of leading civil servants, of energetic manufacturers who have extended trade, of engineers who have executed great public works, of chiefs in literature, art, and science, and of a few other truly useful citizens ; the rest acquire a ribbon because they have grown rusty in fifteenth-rate State functions, and because it has become a habit to smooth over their discharge by making them chevaliers. This is how certain decorations have become discredited ; they have not descended to their actual level because they have been democratised, because the simple soldier and the general-in-chief aspire after the same recompense, because equality in honour is an accepted principle of our century ; — such orders have sunk in value and opinion because they are bestowed without



any kind of reasonable ground or motive, and solely to content stupid vanities.

Each nation uses decorations in its own way. The Italian wears no sign upon his coat, but he takes the title of Commander or Chevalier, and if he holds the former of those two ranks, his wife becomes a countess (though he does not become a count). The Spaniard and the Frenchman put into their button-hole a knot or a rosette according to their grade, but assume no sort of knightly designation. The Germans, when in plain clothes, sometimes show a ribbon; but that habit is, perhaps naturally, unfrequent amongst populations of whom so many live in uniform, and who, consequently, bear the cross itself, which civilians never do, except at parties or on ceremonious occasions. We in England have a fashion of our own of indicating the possessors of our Orders: we give "Sir" to our Grand Crosses and our Commanders, and, as in Italy, we include their wives in the effects of the decoration by bestowing on them the rank of "Lady;" furthermore, we append various capital letters to the name of every holder of a British Order. Every country has its own way of manifesting the ownership of these adornments; the manner varies, but the intent is everywhere identically the same.

All these details are, however, purely local. The international elements of the question do not come into view until we look at the uses of decorations outside the land to which they indigenously belong. These uses are very frequent. In France alone there are about 8000 natives who hold foreign crosses; while, on the other hand, the Legion of Honour is possessed by about 4000 strangers. France alone, consequently, offers about 12,000 ex-

amples (giving and receiving both included) of the use of decorations as international expressions of compliment, of gratitude, or of flattery. It is computed that, including all the Orders, about 55,000 crosses, of all grades, are now bestowed outside their native soil. This figure is large enough to supply clear testimony of the tendency of Governments to employ this handy means of showing courtesy to strangers; and it is a new evidence of the marvellous development of contact and communication which has taken place of late years between the members of European States. Indeed this latter consideration assumes a character of political importance when we follow it up a little further, and ask ourselves how it has become possible that 55,000 people can have rendered services enough to Governments other than their own to have merited a recompense from those Governments. Of course we all well know that a large number of such decorations, including especially the higher ranks, are given as mere formalities of ceremonial to diplomatists and soldiers; but at least three-fourths of the entire number are simple crosses of Chevalier, which have been bestowed in recognition of some real or imaginary service. It is this latter category which is puzzling, and it would be both amusing and instructive to look through the list of motives for which all these distinctions have been conferred. Such a study would explain to us, with the most gratifying indiscretion, what are the particular services which are most freely offered to or accepted by Continental Governments, and would, in this way, afford a curious insight into a hitherto uninvestigated side of human nature. A well-made catalogue of these motives and these services would be a revelation, but in the actual condition of society there is

little prospect of its publication; for, in many cases, neither givers nor receivers would have anything to gain by supplying such details to the world. A few of them are, however, known, and curious stories circulate on the Continent as to the way in which decorations have been sometimes obtained: some of them are droll, and some are sad; some are marvellous inventions, some are lamentable facts. A couple of them may be repeated here as examples.

Napoleon met one day an old soldier with one arm; he stopped, and said to him, "Where did you lose your arm?" "Sire, at Austerlitz," was the reply. "And you were not decorated?" asked the Emperor. "No, Sire; I was forgotten." "Then," rejoined Napoleon, "here is my own cross for you: I make you Chevalier." "Ah, Sire," exclaimed the soldier, "your Majesty names me Chevalier because I have lost one of my arms; what would your Majesty have done if I had lost them both?" "I should have created you officer of the Legion," answered Napoleon. Thereupon the soldier instantly drew his sword and cut off his other arm!!

As a contrast to this nonsense, here is a very different tale; it is said to be strictly true. During the late war, a French General had upon his staff a certain volunteer civilian, who had several times shown signs of unwillingness to expose his person. One morning the General said to him, "Get on horseback, sir; ride beyond our lines till you see the Prussians; draw fire if you can; and then, when you have made out where their outposts exactly are, come back and report to me." The gentleman trotted for two hundred yards, pulled up, and thought he would go no farther. Finally, after a quarter of an hour of fear, he decided to ride home again. As he

reached the cottage where the General was waiting for him, the latter looked out, saw him, and exclaimed, "What? not gone yet? Start instantly, sir." Thereupon the individual in question glanced with terror at the General, and, after a few seconds of hesitation, turned his horse sharp round and rode off at full gallop towards the rear. The General snatched out his revolver, fired at him, and put a ball through his throat. He was carried to an ambulance; remained there for six months, until, in the excitement of the Commune, he was quite forgotten. He then came out with a doctor's certificate, obtained with that document the influence of people who knew nothing of the facts, and finally, on the ground that he had been "wounded before the enemy," obtained the cross.

The need which Orders satisfy is spreading rapidly over all the parallels of longitude. We have already seen that South American republics and Asiatic monarchies are adopting this form of payment for services or politenesses; it is pretended that even in the Soudan there is a decoration called "The Palm Tree and the Alligator," which, locally, is reputed to be "the most sublime title that a mortal can obtain." Ceremonial forms, and titles are diminishing, but stars are multiplying; the shapes of vanity, like the shapes of bonnets, change as time goes on; the nineteenth century pretends to have become indifferent on points of precedence or of royal denominations; but it compensates that sacrifice in this new way, and takes its joy in abundance of decorations. There is neither more nor less absurdity in one vanity than in the other; all such manifestations are of the same family: but, in our day, they have changed their principle, and, like most other details of public action, have ceased to be the exclusive pro-



perty of a class. Politically, this is advantageous, for free competition makes more useful citizens than monopolies can produce; but, morally, the effect is probably the other way, for it can scarcely be supposed that vanity is not increasing with the increasing nourishment which is everywhere being given to it. It is true that crosses are becoming something more than a means of Government; it is true that they are assuming in some degree the character of a friendly and almost personal tie between peoples. But, however much we may appreciate this element of the subject, we shall never manage to efface its other aspects; we shall never be able to deny that mean and unworthy consequences are resulting, all over Europe, from the popularisation of a sort of vanity which originally influenced only a restricted section of each nation.

And yet it is idle to regret it, for the usage of democratised decorations forms now an essential characteristic of Continental life, and seems likely to go on developing and ex-

tending as naturally as the consumption of tea and candles. In ceasing to be the privilege of a class, ribbons have gradually taken their place amongst the general objects of existence. It is true that something must be done to get them, but that something has ceased to be beyond the reach of ordinary people; almost everybody in the middle ranks of European society can dream now that he will be decorated some day; and it is probable that the process will grow still easier, as the world rolls on. Such a result carries us a long way from the white linen cross of Jerusalem, but it is one of the progresses of our epoch; and after all, the founders of the fighting Orders would have no more reason to complain of it, if they were to come back to earth, than of newspaper correspondents or vote by ballot or universal exhibitions, or any other product of our time. We require all these things, and decorations too—so we have them: and, apparently, shall go on using them until something better is invented.

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## THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

THE first consequence of the memorable dissolution has been the fall of Mr Gladstone's Government, followed by a general confusion in the ranks of the Liberal party. The country had pronounced its verdict with unhesitating promptitude and decision; and scarcely were the elections over before Mr Gladstone, following the precedent of his great rival in 1868, retired from office. The new Cabinet was installed in power in a very few days, and Mr Disraeli leisurely continued the task of forming his Administration. All parties, tongues, and pens have acquiesced in the national decision. The new Ministry is respected as a strong Government, and is felt to be the only possible Administration. It is a novel sight to the present generation, to many perhaps startling, from the suddenness and completeness of the change, to witness the Tory party firmly planted in power, with their Liberal opponents a defeated and disorganised confederacy. And now that the first enthusiasm of party triumph is over, it is important to estimate with closer attention the true political position, and what are the changed characteristics of party and public life which have led to this result.

It is a striking circumstance that in little more than five years the nation should have decisively declared, first, by a majority of 112, in favour of a policy which was founded on a principle of violence and threatened many powerful interests and sentiments; and secondly, by a majority of 50, in favour of a policy which is founded upon a spirit of law and order. A close analysis of election returns in the former case proves that under severe defeat the Tory party showed decided signs of life

and energy and future success. And even in its present forlorn predicament the Liberal party is 300 strong, and though seriously weakened by internal divisions, has within it the elements of renewed strength and hope; if, indeed, it is not too demoralised by past success, to be able to profit by the uses of adversity. One obvious conclusion is, that in the new constituencies there is a large mass of unattached voting power, which is swayed by the circumstances of the hour, which owes no party allegiance, or under the Ballot can escape from it, and which is powerful enough to take into its own hands the destinies of the country. We may expect to see the ship of State lurch more readily and more thoroughly in time to come than in time past. Parties will probably replace one another at considerably less intervals than those of forty years, such as Mr Gladstone referred to in his election address. That will not be an unmixed evil, considering how slightly the moderate and sensible men who form the strength of either party differ from one another; and it will be distinctly an advantage to have on either side of the House a trained body of experienced statesmen ready to succeed one another on emergencies, not merely in office but in actual power and responsibility. It is the rivalry of a present and potential Cabinet which, in presence especially of the growing power of the masses, will be the ultimate guarantees of responsible Government on the one side, of healthy and legitimate opposition on the other. It is clear, too, that that unattached voting power to which both sides must appeal is a political entity which must be carefully



studied, and, if possible, understood. It holds the balance between rival parties; it decides in secret; it can command for the most selfish rivalry attention to its behests; and it evidently sits in watchful judgment on the course of administration. The journals of the day, the "silly newspapers," which repeat their commonplace alliterations of the Bible and beer, publicans and priests, clearly do not represent it, do not understand it, and cannot divine its sentiments, or the course which it will take. Not one of them predicted the result of the late election; scarcely any of them refrained from scoffing at "Conservative reaction," whatever that phrase may mean, or at the existence of Conservative working men. Even the most experienced public men were at fault. Mr Gladstone was almost jubilant at the prospective success of his *coup d'état*. Mr Disraeli, in his election address and his speech at Aylesbury, seemed to us to betray a misgiving that his rival, to use his own expression, had thrown snuff in the eyes of the public, and that before they recovered their senses he would have looted them of power. Almost universal opinion was in favour of the Liberals being confirmed in office by a smaller but compact majority.

One reflection of present importance which must occur to every one is, that until the new constituencies are better understood, it would be extremely rash again to reopen the question of reform of Parliament in any shape. This country, as Lord John Russell wisely observed, cannot stand a revolution once a year. With a strong Conservative majority, there can be no excuse for any further absorbing and obstructive discussions about the extension of the franchise and redistribution of seats. Neither the claims of householders in counties, nor the claims of women—

which Mr Forsyth, the Conservative member for Marylebone, has undertaken to urge—are of such paramount importance as to preclude all hope of a reasonable finality being assured to the existing arrangements. It is also desirable that a censure upon sudden dissolutions should be universal and severe. The constituencies have shown themselves capable of returning a firm and decided answer upon any issue placed before them; and the policy which is submitted for their approval ought to be thoroughly discussed and fully matured before they are called upon to decide. The device of taking them by storm by a sudden announcement of golden promises has been eminently unsuccessful. And although the House of Commons has exercised a generous forbearance in the matter, having regard to the catastrophe which ensued, the manœuvre ought not to escape a lasting condemnation. It was eminently unconstitutional, humiliating to the nation's self-respect, and, if frequently repeated, would be fatal to the hopes which every patriotic Englishman must entertain of grave and responsible self-government. And lastly, the device of submitting the question of a particular tax to the constituencies—a tax which does not affect all classes—is one which is unprincipled and dangerous to the last degree. Detailed questions concerning the just and equal incidence of taxation are pre-eminently questions for Parliament, and ought to be decided with the most rigid attention to considerations of abstract justice. The man who throws them to the constituencies endeavours to warp and mislead the minds of voters as much as the man who administers a bribe. It is absolutely essential to keep clear and distinct the several functions of the electoral body and of Parliament. We are

not amongst those who look with unqualified approval upon Ministers resigning after calculating electoral returns, instead of submitting their conduct and policy to the deliberate judgment of the nation's representatives in Parliament assembled. The supposed convenience of the hour may be strained too far, and we prefer adherence to the recognised constitutional usage. But the man who appeals to the country on the merits of a particular tax,—who virtually says to the majority, "Give me your support and I will impose or remove taxation at your pleasure, in a manner which I have not explained to Parliament, and which Parliament has not considered,"—fails in his duty both to Parliament and to the people. It is certainly to the honour of the new constituencies that they have not been bought in that way. It will not redound to Mr Gladstone's fame that in a moment of political desperation he ventured to make the experiment. The aggressive violence which had destroyed a Church, and has marred the whole career of his Ministry, reappeared to the scandal of the country upon the delicate question of national taxation. It is to the last degree important that Parliament, and not the electoral body, should adjust the burdens of the country, and decide as to the distribution of a surplus.

The resignation of Mr Gladstone, in recognition of his decisive defeat by the constituencies, closes a remarkable chapter in English history. It was made in consequence of a formal transfer of political power, in a manner as marked and significant as any in the party annals of the last century and a half. The immediate circumstances under which it has been made are important to be noted; for the new constituencies, of whose character and

tendencies we are all uninformed, roughly brushed aside the financial issue presented to them, and notwithstanding the suddenness of the appeal, decided upon the whole circumstances of the case. In some important respects these circumstances were favourable to the Ministers. The prosperity of the country was undoubted; and it was not denied that in many important respects the Ministry had contributed to that prosperity. And above all, they had successfully carried out the programme with which they originally started; and which, it must not be forgotten, they were expressly authorised by the country to carry out. But, at the same time, they had accumulated considerable discontents, and had aroused bitter antagonism of feeling in all classes, trades, and professions. They had seriously threatened powerful interests and institutions of established authority. Their foreign policy had been eminently unsuccessful, with one striking exception—viz., that they had kept us out of hostilities pending the war between Germany and France. Their home legislation had not pacified Ireland, nor even alleviated its chronic disaffection. Notwithstanding all their conciliation, Ireland was only held down by stronger coercive measures than had ever before been resorted to. The fantastic movement of the Home-Rulers was the obvious outcome of their policy, and had been predicted in so many words in the protest of the House of Lords against the Irish Church Act. They had sought to escape from the growing perplexities of their position by resignation, but had been foiled by the resolution of their opponents not to take office till they had submitted their Ministerial acts to the judgment of the country. At last the position became intolerable, and the Govern-



ment determined either to resign or to have an accession of strength from the constituencies. No one can blame them for that decision ; but it is the first time that a dissolution has been resorted to as a mere means of party discipline to alleviate the hidden embarrassments of party leadership. And the suddenness and secrecy observed, so contrary to usage, and so perilous to the main object of obtaining a mature judgment from the constituencies, have never been explained, and are distinctly unconstitutional and unprecedented.

Thus, notwithstanding the prosperity of the country, the true position of Mr Gladstone's Government, which Ministers vainly endeavoured to conceal by the accustomed panegyric on themselves, and the ordinary stale invective against their opponents, was one of serious failure in reference to the past, coupled with a vague and irresolute attitude in regard to several leading questions of the day. Under these circumstances the Ministry proposed to bribe the people of England with the expected surplus, and Mr Gladstone himself promised the electors of Greenwich that his measures would relieve them of a particularly grievous toll of which they complained. The total failure of these tactics does not lessen the necessity, in the interests of public morality and purity of election, of inviting public attention to their real character and tendency. It is important that the influence which the Prime Minister and the leader of the House of Commons has over legislation should not seem to be bartered for the purpose of influencing an individual election. And it is also of the last consequence to the nation that the adjustments of taxation and of all the difficult questions of our complicated system of finance should be

made by the deliberate wisdom of Parliament, with strict regard to considerations of abstract justice as to its incidence upon different classes, and should not be thrown to the constituencies as the price of power, to be settled by the voice of the strongest. It is the most serious blot on Mr Gladstone's financial fame that in his eagerness to snatch a favourable verdict from the country on the strength of former Budgets, he should have set an example of claiming a majority on the promise of remitting a tax which fell most heavily on the class which wields the greatest influence over the course of elections. The questions which will most try the honesty and courage of statesmen in the presence of enfranchised multitudes will be the means of securing impartial taxation, so that whether our policy be one of peace or war, all shall bear their proportionate share of the burden. Look, for example, at the deputations which have crowded to Downing Street the moment that a large surplus was officially advertised. Look at that astounding proposition that all taxes should be raised from realised property. If a Prime Minister places his surplus at the disposal of the majority, or uses it as a means wherewith to purchase support, what is this but to debauch the public mind with the notion that the party in the ascendant has the right to tax the minority? A more fatal principle to place before an untaught democracy it is impossible to suggest. Whatever may be the advantages of enlarged constituencies, nothing can be more obvious than the increased demand which is made upon leading statesmen to exhibit self-restraint, moderation, and resolute sense of justice, if maxims of political morality are to retain their influence upon the national mind.

Our complaint of Mr Gladstone's sensational legislation is, that it has familiarised the public mind with spoliation, and invited it to the distribution of plunder. Our chief quarrel with his sensational dissolution is, that it tends to degrade questions of finance from the region of science and justice to the level of commonplace devices to entrap a majority at the hustings. It is the first time in political history that a Minister has submitted his Budget to the electors instead of their representatives, and we trust that it will be the last.

Besides the discredit into which the Ministry had fallen, and the grave reproach which is justly attributable to the manner in which they exercised their right of appeal to the electors, it is to the growing disorganisation of the Liberal party, and to the causes which have led to it, that we must look for an explanation of this transfer of power. The transparent insincerity which has characterised their party connection for the last quarter of a century, and which owed its success to adroit management, and also in great degree to patrician influence (neither of which, however, has been recently conspicuous), has failed it in presence of the new constituencies and of Mr Gladstone's "terrible earnestness." The ardent spirits who longed "to push on with accelerated speed" to further triumphs have roused so much of genuine disapproval and opposition, and have so long threatened irreconcilable enmity, that further united action became a hopeless dream. The appearance of a new point of departure or principle of secession in what is called the Home Rule movement completed the work of disintegration; and not even the fame and authority of Mr Gladstone, with choice of time and opportunity, could prevent the once great Liberal

party presenting before the electors a mere dissolving view of anarchy and confusion. It did not need Mr Gladstone's earnest entreaty for "united Liberal action" to prove the disorganisation of his party. The very mode and manner of his appeal showed that his main object was to restore his own followers and his Cabinet to political health and tone. Nearly the whole course of his Premiership has been distinguished even less by Ministerial blunders and legislative failures than by the caricature of all trustworthy government, which was afforded by the continuous spectacle of wholly irresponsible persons, both in and out of Parliament, without moral or official authority, without either the talents or experience of statesmanship, presuming to initiate, sometimes with encouragement from Cabinet Ministers, great organic changes, and even to dictate the whole policy and platform of the Ministerial party. One man proposed the abolition of purchase in the army; and when he had succeeded in that, he induced the Ministers to give a consent, subsequently withdrawn, to assimilate the county and borough suffrage, involving large measures of disfranchisement and redistribution. Another wanted to abolish the Monarchy. A Cabinet Minister published threatening letters against the House of Lords, recalling the time when, as a private member, he had advised the masses to line Parliament Street "from Charing Cross to the venerable Abbey" in order to intimidate the House of Commons. The Prime Minister himself scoffed at Peers as at persons who were up in a balloon, hopelessly removed from all sensible persons. Other men wanted to abrogate the education policy of the Government, and, not without the openly expressed sympathy of Cabi-



net Ministers, to upset all the schools in the country. Others wanted to disestablish the Church of England, Mr Bright and some of his colleagues declaring that the measure was the necessary consequence of disestablishing the Irish Church, Mr Gladstone evidently preferring that it should stand over till his own career was closed. Others asserted that nothing would satisfy them but "free land, free church, free labour, and free schools," a cry which was explained to mean a general reconstruction of all social and ecclesiastical arrangements. The Liberal Cabinet under Mr Gladstone's management plundered churches and despoiled landlords; the rank and file of the party were all eagerness and emulation to provide the next victim, and cheer on the huntsmen. The leaders stimulated agitation in favour of successive schemes which they were positively reluctant to execute, and surrender and concession were carried to lengths which threatened the transfer of all real power from the hands of competent statesmen to those of irresponsible demagogues.

The result is, that the combined efforts of the Liberationists, the Birmingham Leaguers, the Home Rulers, the Permissive Bill men, the opponents of the 25th clause, and other bodies of like calibre and pretensions, have succeeded in arousing a strong reverence for law and order, and a decided distrust of a Ministry which depended on them for support, and which adopted towards them an attitude of conscious weakness. It is that conscious weakness which is the most significant sign of the prostration of Liberalism. The masterly inactivity of Lord Palmerston, and the rout of the party on the subject of Parliamentary reform, were immediately followed by a period of intense and violent action.

In 1868 we experienced the full strength and vigour of the party; the recoil has shown in 1874 the extent of its inherent weakness. The leader who in the former year rallied a host to carry out a sweeping and revolutionary policy towards Ireland, dared not in 1874 speak his mind on the subject of a solitary clause in the English Education Act. So long as he could overwhelm the different sections of his party by proclaiming a policy which temporarily cast their schemes into the shade, his power was assured. In less than two years it began to wane; and, unable to lead opinion, and unwilling to submit to dictation, his only chance of retaining power was to produce another programme of his own. Till he has done so, every one of his wayward regiments is indignantly urging him "to push on with accelerated speed"—i.e., adopt their plans, or "else make way for bolder and more active men." All these regiments had to be conciliated; and the consequence was, that the Prime Minister could not guide the mind of the country upon any single subject of paramount interest, for fear of offending one or more of the sections whose support was essential to his government. Mr Gladstone in his election address, in his own words, "had to speak rather as a member of a party than as a member of Cabinet." Upon Home Rule, national education, the county franchise, the effect of his measures in Ireland, the distribution of the surplus funds of the Irish Church temporalities, he was either entirely silent or spoke in a tentative and deprecatory manner, which showed that his power was at an end. In former days the party would have resumed the functions of masterly inactivity. Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston drew more vigor-

ous support from the old Whig party; they had limited constituencies to deal with; and the country relied upon them firmly to restrain the more impulsive energies of their extreme supporters. The conditions of Mr Gladstone's power were entirely different. It rested on the votes of extreme sections; and to judge from the speeches of the Duke of Somerset and Earl Grey, it never was cordially approved of or supported by the old Whig party. When his programme was exhausted, there was no reserve of power in his hands. Unwilling, to his honour be it said, to embark in new enterprises which he distrusted or had not matured, he strove hard, at some cost of political reputation, to rally his followers round financial propositions, in which he is skilled and powerful. His colleagues faithfully extolled the career of their chief, and the past exploits of the party. But the worn-out politics of the constituencies of 1832, and the tactics which suited their prejudices and prepossessions, are at last superseded by a more vigorous political life. The new electoral body has shown that it desires decided and definite leadership. It has shown that it is capable of judging for itself; it can be filled with enthusiasm for a leader, it can adopt a violent programme. On the other hand, it is obviously impatient of hesitating and divided counsels. Unmeaning compromises and tentative schemes must be numbered amongst the lost arts of government. A Liberal leader must face the perils of firmly restraining his more fanatical followers; for the suspicion of his timidity or weakness will be fatal to his power. A vague historical retrospect, such as Mr Bright and Mr Lowe delight to indulge in, will

never be accepted in lieu of present capacity. We doubt very much if the new constituencies would ever have tolerated the elaborate trifling by which the Liberal party maintained their ascendancy for nearly twenty years, while they engaged the whole country in interminable controversies about lowering a £10 franchise by a few pounds more or less. These new electors do not seem to have troubled themselves whether Parliament would, in Mr Gladstone's language, accommodate the difficulties of the 25th clause. They preferred to decide, in a rough and powerful way, whether religion should be taught in the national schools, or whether it should, once for all, be excluded from them. The Liberal leader who bids for the confidence of the new democracy must have a definite principle, and enunciate a decided policy, or he cannot hope for power. It will be useless for him to nibble at great questions which are not ripe for solution. It will be of no avail to patch up understandings and compromises with discontented followers. He must vindicate the existence of his party by proving that his followers have common principles and common aims, and that his policy deserves the support of the nation.

For years past the Liberal party has not been able, except in the moments of consternation produced by the Reform Bill of 1867 having escaped from its grasp, to fulfil these conditions. Mr Gladstone's eloquence, authority, and violent programme, for a time restored its ascendancy; but it has lived fast since then, and its vitality has been speedily exhausted. At its first appeal to the new constituencies, it has ceased to be a political party, and stands revealed, even to its shallowest supporters, as a mere



conglomeration of discordant sects, utterly unfitted to be trusted with the government of a great empire. Wearied with repeating commonplace cries about progress, and religious liberty, and political reform, which have long ceased to have any meaning, it discovered in its last throes that the only people who stood a chance of profiting by its ill-regulated enthusiasm were either the adroit leaders who in times past reduced them to masterly inactivity, or the advanced thinkers who knew what they were about, who derided religion, and were hostile to all the institutions which make up the sum and substance of England's historical identity. The long ascendancy of the Liberal party has been the triumph of forms and phrases, which like the Tupperian philosophy have had a large circulation amongst the ten-pound householders, and has rested upon that timid respectability which in certain classes has given to Liberalism the power of a prevailing fashion. It must now reorganise itself, and find a definite platform upon which it can agree. Until it does so—and its chance of succeeding appears to us extremely remote—it can never regain that absolute and prolonged supremacy which it has held for so long a period. That supremacy has been coeval with the rule of the ten-pound householders. And history must decide as to the true character of the singular confederacy which, without any common principle or definite aims, but vaguely claiming the exclusive possession of what are called “Liberal ideas,” branded its opponents as “the stupid party,” and dared to monopolise the whole credit of national progress and prosperity.

The downfall of the Liberal party is chiefly welcome as a stern re-

buke, administered by the whole country, to the impracticable and wayward politicians whose “advanced views” were their only title to notoriety, and who are now relegated to their native obscurity. It is their efforts which have so largely contributed to make the strength and virtue of all classes of the community range themselves on the side of the Conservatives. We agree with Mr Harrison in the ‘Fortnightly Review,’ that “the Conservative party has become as much the middle-class party as the Liberal used to be—as much, and more. . . . There is nothing now exclusive about the Conservative party. It is, in the old sense of the word, just as popular and democratic as the Liberal party.” And if we attribute this result in some measure to the efforts of those self-constituted champions of the working classes, whose intolerance and presumption Mr Disraeli derided the other day, when he congratulated the actual members of that class who had entered Parliament, something also is due to the skilful leadership of the Tory party during the last quarter of a century. If it had been ruined by disastrous leadership in times gone by, it has repaired the defect during the present generation. Even the Czar of all the Russias, the type of all absolutism, is said to have quizzed our Ambassador about the fears with which the English Tories regarded the Reform Bill of 1832, and to have assured that Minister that if he had been the sovereign of England he would have found no difficulty in assenting to it. No one can now reproach them with fearing the masses, any more than Mr Pitt and Lord Shelburne, who first invoked the power of the people, are liable to such imputation. They placed at their head,

and followed with devotion, the late Lord Derby, who, more than any statesman, helped to secure the Act of 1832, and was covered with the renown of slave-trade emancipation. To him and to Mr Disraeli we owe it, that, fortunately for the country, the Tory party at this conjuncture has been able to appeal to the enlarged constituencies with renewed confidence and vigour. Its policy and sympathies are in unison with those of the country, and it has long shaken off the reproach of exclusiveness and restriction which a bygone generation of statesmen had formerly fastened upon it. It has long been maturing its power, and the very foundations upon which it rests are inconsistent with its policy ever again degenerating into cliquism or prejudice. It draws its strength from all classes alike, and must vindicate its existence by a policy which shall be comprehensive and national. The stigma of class legislation can no longer rest upon a party in which any one class would be powerless by itself, and is transferred to the noisy sects which have earned from Liberal leaders the nickname of crotchetmongers, and which openly make their own class interests the test questions to candidates on the hustings.

Under these circumstances it is probable that the dissolution of 1874, with its decisive results, will be as famous in English history as the dissolutions of 1784 and 1831. Mr Gladstone himself, by a remarkable coincidence, drew attention in his manifesto to the electors of Greenwich, to the two chapters of history which began at those dates, one of which he was, perhaps by his own act, unconsciously closing. The former dissolution effected the consolidation of the Tory party, under the guidance of Mr Pitt,

which thereupon ruled the nation for forty-six years; the latter produced a strong Liberal confederacy, under the leadership of Earl Grey, which with brief intervals has ruled the country for nearly the same space of time. Now follows another complete transference of power; and the Liberals, after varying successes and defeats, and after achievements which they are a little too demonstrative in applauding, have again in their turn been thrown to the constituencies a divided, discredited, and defeated organisation. But the surrounding incidents are marvelously different. In the two former cases, a Ministry, struggling against adverse circumstances and victorious opponents, appealed from prolonged encounters in Parliament to the deliberate judgment of the nation upon issues which were momentous and decisive, which the world appreciated, and which the English public thoroughly understood. Mr Pitt, overborne by the combined hosts of Mr Fox and Lord North, out-debated and out-voted, after a struggle which has no Parliamentary parallel—unless we except the gallant efforts of Sir R. Peel in 1834, or of Mr Disraeli in 1868—appealed to the nation whether it would be governed by the sceptre of a constitutional sovereign, or the tongue of a dissolute noble and the manœuvres of an oligarchical faction. Earl Grey represented and embodied a rising tide of passionate feeling, which the statesmen of a former generation, contrary to all the principles of Toryism, had vainly striven to repress, and appealed to the nation whether Parliament should be reformed and power redistributed. In both cases the Minister prevailed, and his opponents were scattered to the winds. But the case in 1874 is entirely different. The Minister who made the appeal is equal in re-



putation, authority, and eloquence, to either of his two predecessors. The manner and consequences of his appeal are widely dissimilar to those of the eminent men to whom we have referred. He was unable to lay before the country any issues of principle to decide, or any definite policy to approve. He could not point to a factious or even an active Opposition to be destroyed. He came out of an ambush, to snatch by suddenness and secrecy the prolongation of his power. Yet the political situation, in our judgment, will yield to neither of the two former epochs in point of historical interest, or in the novelty of the incidents by which it is surrounded. It is worthy of being weighed and understood; for it indicates the commencement of a new chapter in the history of party government, and exhibits the altered circumstances of public life introduced by the Reform Act of 1867, and the establishment of secret voting. Those to whom the party history of England for the last century and half is matter of interest, may find in the present position of politics room for the speculative inquiry whether the change in political sentiment is the accident of the hour, of no deeper significance than the national verdict of 1841, or whether it denotes a more solid and determined acceptance of political principles. When Sir Robert Peel was carried into office by a majority of 100—which, together with his control over the House of Lords and his influence on the Continent, rendered him by far the most powerful Minister of the present century—the event was proved to have no deeper significance than to express utter disgust at the administrative weakness and financial incapacity of Lord Melbourne's Government. The new Cabinet differed from the old in point merely of experience and

ability, and endeavoured to govern with a party whose principles had not been placed in accord with the times, and which still retained the exclusive and repressive spirit fostered in an age of mediocrity and failure.

No one would think of comparing Mr Gladstone's Administration with that of Lord Melbourne, or Mr Disraeli in 1874 with Sir R. Peel in 1841. We do not now witness the spectacle of an effete and almost paralysed Government being replaced by an "organised hypocrisy" or mere respectable efficiency. The duel which has just closed lay between two men of historic renown and of splendid energies, and whose careers stand out in marked and definite contrast to each other, and whose parties are divided from each other in the distinctest manner by the principles which they assert, and by the mode of their organisation. Mr Gladstone represents a policy which was original, violent, and successful, which by matchless eloquence he had induced the country to accept, and which it at length, as the consequences unfolded themselves, repented of and disapproved. He had welded together for a time, in a triumphant and overwhelming manner, the discordant sections which compose the Liberal party, and had imposed upon them obedience and devotion. He carried out nearly the whole of his programme. Success was fatal to his power, and his army was dissolved into its primitive elements of discord and confusion. Mr Disraeli represents the policy which he has consistently maintained throughout his marvellous career, of rendering the Tory party the great popular confederacy of the country, free from class prejudice and class interests, animated by respect for law, justice, and order, an efficient instrument for governing in reference to

enlightened public opinion, instead of servile obedience to interested and organised agitation. He has devoted his career and a leadership of unexampled duration to place the Tory party once more in accord with the sympathies and convictions of the people. That policy was completed by the Act of 1867. With the establishment of a popular confederacy the vocation of Liberalism, as it has hitherto existed, is gone. The nation has declared decisively in favour of the new confederacy, in preference to the haphazard combination of sects which have recently shown, by several grotesque exhibitions, that each of them regards its own class project or cherished "fad" as superior to all claims of patriotism or the common national welfare.

The characteristic feature of modern English politics has been the growth of unnecessary and prolonged agitation. And a singular part of the history of agitations—a striking proof, we should say, how little congenial they are to the soil of England—is, that any attempt to prolong the existence of an influential league in order to promote the personal importance of its members, after its public object has been attained, has always failed. The fate which overtook the Anti-Corn-Law League and the Birmingham League after the policy of Free Trade and of Education had prevailed, ought to be remembered in future. The constant resort to agitation, which is the very life of the Liberal party, can never be regarded as a sound and rational method of conducting public affairs. The practice of agitation as a normal means of government is inconsistent with a free press and a free Parliament, and even with the formation and supremacy of a sound public opinion. In no period of our history has this pernicious practice of

governing England by leagues and agitators, in supersession of the three estates of the realm, been carried to such a dangerous extent as under the Liberal auspices of the last forty years, and especially of the last five or six. There are numbers of these leagues or societies now in existence, all of them prepared to make their particular crotchets test-questions at elections, and determined to force them upon the country, regardless of consequences, without taking the trouble of mastering the difficult details with which they are often surrounded. And since the principle of civil and religious liberty which animated the old Whig party has been successfully asserted, Liberal leadership has degenerated into a mere matter of bargaining with prominent agitators whether total surrender or partial concession would purchase their support. When the new constituencies were called into existence, all minor agitators were hushed into silence by the appearance of the great Liberal leader in the field, as a sort of successor of O'Connell, with his cry of justice to Ireland by Church, Land, and Education Acts. A large majority accepted his programme. But on its disappearance the minor characters have again come forward, stimulated and encouraged by the success of their chief, till the whole country, panic-stricken at the prospect opened, calls for legitimate and responsible government. Our view of the present state of affairs is, that the enlarged constituencies of the kingdom are weary of continued agitation even more than of Mr Gladstone's Ministry, and deliberately prefer constitutional government through responsible statesmen, to the restless self-assertion of uninstructed Leagues and demagogues.



The predominance of the Liberal party dates from the dissolution of 1831. Previous to that time the Tory party had, from 1784, held almost uninterrupted rule. It had been reconstructed by the genius of Pitt, and the principles which it was called into existence to vindicate were essentially popular. They included Free Trade and the reform of Parliament. The object was to derive from all classes of the people support to the throne and Government against the exclusive system of the great families who sought to wield the whole power of the State. The French Revolution followed, the panic from which was lashed into fury by Burke; and the consequences upon English politics can never be exaggerated. The fame of Mr Pitt himself has been obscured. His successors, to quote Mr Disraeli's words, "inherited all his errors without the latent genius which in him might have still rallied, and extricated him from the consequences of his disaster. They did not merely inherit his errors; they exaggerated, they caricatured him. They rolled into power on a spring-tide of all the rampant prejudices and rancorous passions of their time. Impudently usurping the name of that party of which nationality, and therefore universality, is the essence, these pseudo-Tories made exclusion the principle of their political constitution, and restriction the genius of their commercial code." All political talent and political education appeared to have been lost for ever during the long wars which had diverted the energies of the nation.

It was under these circumstances that the Liberals first sprang into active existence. They reformed Parliament, and, in an arbitrary fashion, fixed the suffrage upon no intelligible principle, in a manner

which seemed to invite and encourage, notwithstanding their finality declarations, further changes. Civil and religious liberty was their flag; O'Connell was their conspicuous ally. In nine reformed Parliaments we have had the opportunity of testing the efficiency of this organisation, both in time of peace and in time of war. In that time the most successful administrators whom they produced were chiefly taken from the Tory party. If their leader, after they have held power for forty years, retires, they cannot replace him. They have no rising juniors. Their most prominent officials either sit "like a row of extinct volcanoes" in the House of Lords; or, discarded by their constituencies, despair of returning to Parliament until a new Reform Bill has enfranchised some confiding universities. The principles, the power, and even the existence of the party of 1832, have passed away. It was superseded from time to time by the men who wielded the power which was derived from the outside agitation. An impartial historian of those nine Parliaments will confess that the two parties who confronted one another at the dissolution of 1831 had in half a generation ceased to exist, so far as any traces of their identity were concerned. In the confusion which ensued, when followers would not follow and leaders could not lead—when one party deserted Lord John Russell, and Sir R. Peel, *splendide mendax*, as his rivals said, betrayed the other—two men stood out from the rest with clear definite aims from which they never swerved, and which at last asserted their supremacy,—Mr Cobden and Mr Disraeli. The former saw clearly enough that in an age of confused aims, and of principles and passions inherited from

a former generation but unsuited to the times, organised agitation by men who knew their own minds and what they wanted must necessarily prevail, and would dominate over both parties alike. The latter understood that in order to extinguish agitation, and again to revive a party which had been the chosen instrument of government in the hands of England's greatest statesmen, and which had asserted principles and possessed traditions of which every member of it might be proud, something more was wanted than "to substitute the fulfilment of the duties of office for the performance of the function of government, and to maintain this negative system by the mere influence of property, reputable private conduct, and what are called good connections." The aim of his life has been "to vindicate the just claims of the Tory party to be the popular political confederation of the country." In this aim he has at last succeeded. Under his guidance the Tory party has enfranchised the masses, rid itself of the encumbrance of obsolete prejudices, laid down the principles on which the suffrage is conferred, and settled the distribution of power. He is now placed at the head of that Tory democracy which he has created, and has the opportunity of showing to the world the principle upon which its power should be exercised, and the mode in which it should conduct the government of the country.

The circumstances of the time are therefore favourable to the entire reconstruction of political parties. It can no longer be expected that, with the enlarged constituencies, a hard and fast line of party division will run through them. There will always be a mass of floating opinion and unattached votes which will be influenced by the circumstances of

the hour at each election. But as long as the English constitution remains, there will always be organised opinion and parties in the State, as the only means by which a stable Government and a responsible Opposition can possibly be conducted. In estimating, however, the character and pretensions of the existing confederation, it is time to dispense with the obsolete jargon in which a whole generation of Liberal statesmen have indulged. Only the other day, at Birmingham, Mr Bright, for the hundred and first time, recounted the marvellous triumph of Liberalism for the last forty years, and demonstrated to his own satisfaction that all national progress was the outcome of Liberal statesmanship. It is the prevailing fashion of the party to indulge in this extravagant vein. Liberals, according to them, are the authors of all the progress that England has made in arts, manufactures, wealth, liberty, and knowledge. Tories, in every department of life, are mere obstructives. We trust that Mr Bright believed what he said. He has upon these subjects *une tête malade*, or monomania. We have no wish to undervalue the past achievements of the Liberal party. Mr Bright compares their harassing legislation to the Ten Commandments, and apparently considers that it involved no breach of the Decalogue. But its present pretensions, like those of any other organisation, must be soberly judged of in reference to its past history and the circumstances of the time. It has become effete and worn out. It has not, like Toryism, its roots deep in the history of the country. No one can detect in the majority which placed Mr Gladstone in power in 1868 the faintest traces of the old Whig party of 1831.



The Whigs have entirely disappeared, and with them all their distinctive principles, some of which have been successfully asserted and others of which have become obsolete. They have been superseded by a novel confederacy, in which scarcely a Whig remains. The great Liberal party, as Mr Gladstone's majority of 1868 was called, had no more in common with the Whigs of 1831 than Mr Lowe has in character and sympathies with Lord John Russell. It was a temporary conglomeration of diverse sects, brought together by Mr Gladstone's eloquence and authority for a temporary purpose, and afterwards disbanded by "irreconcilable" enmity. Such a combination has no enduring bond of union, no historic continuity, and no real efficiency for the purpose of conducting Government. It was powerful for the work of demolition; but in any constructive policy like that of National Education, it was obliged, in the height of its majority and power, to fall back upon Conservative principles and Conservative support. From the very law and principles of its existence, such a confederacy can have no legitimate claims on the permanent confidence of the country. It is bound together neither by principle nor by tradition. It relies for support on numerous leagues, associations, unions, and agitations, all of which have separate aims and separate class or trade interests. Its whole character and pretensions were foreign to everything which we have been accustomed to respect in political life. There was no pretence of unity of sentiment amongst its leaders on the most vital principles of policy. There was a total failure to maintain the usual dignity and decorum of her Majesty's Ministers. The survivors and descendants of those proud and

exclusive Whigs who presided over the Revolution of 1832 must have looked on with dismay at the proceedings of those extraordinary men who had supplanted them in power. From first to last Mr Bright observed no reticence. The Board of Trade never had a more inefficient president. But as Minister of the Crown he threatened the House of Lords as glibly as if he were only member for Birmingham; in direct contradiction to Mr Gladstone, he declared that justice to England involved the same principles of legislation as justice to Ireland; and he denounced the Education Act of his own colleagues as the worst measure passed since 1832. Mr Lowe's public utterances were divided between applauding himself and explaining the unpopularity of the Ministry. Of all the public men of the day, he is the only one who has suffered serious personal violence at a contested election, and is openly taunted with being afraid to show up before a popular constituency. Whether from inherent faults or from habits contracted during his former life, he certainly is the only Minister of Queen Victoria who has habitually rendered himself obnoxious in office, in the House, with deputations, and on the hustings. He is the only Minister who has been removed from office on account of constant personal quarrels, who was not on speaking terms with his own subordinates, and whose manners and bearing are constantly rebuked as an importation from Australia. Mr Gladstone himself belongs to a totally different school from his two principal colleagues. He has personally maintained the dignity of his office, and added new lustre to it by his eloquence and fame. But no genius or reputation could redeem the discredit or prevent the

downfall which such colleagues and such followers bring upon a statesman. Far more than "harassing legislation," the conduct and utterances of Ministers, the language and proceedings of their supporters, and the lamentable indecision of Mr Gladstone, have been a standing menace to the people of England. It was actually a relief to the whole country when Mr Disraeli, as Premier elect, declared in favour of the 25th clause. Though a matter intrinsically insignificant, the course of turbulent politicians with regard to it had converted it into a dangerous battlefield, and Mr Gladstone was posi-

tively reluctant to express an opinion, and could only hope that the renovated legislature would accommodate its difficulties. Nothing can illustrate more clearly the total inadequacy of such an organisation as the Liberal party for the government of the country. And no hope for its continued supremacy will remain when the intelligence of the country, awakened at last to the real character of this worn-out Liberalism, recognises that that narrow and beaten track along which it is reluctantly dragged by the Jacobins of the day leads to no ultimate goal which can possibly recommend itself to the friends of progress.

#### ASHANTEE.

##### EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF A NAVAL OFFICER ADDRESSED TO HIS WIFE.

26th Dec. 1873.—Naval Brigade starts on its march for Prahsu on 27th inst. at 4 A.M. We go up about 200 strong. The General has written to the Commodore saying that "the honour of first crossing the river has been given to the navy, because of the way it had assisted him in clearing the enemy out of the country on this side of the river, and of being desirous of showing his high appreciation of their zealous spirit, and that those who have so gallantly borne the burden and heat of the day should have the honour of being the first to cross into Ashantee."

Since I last wrote, we have had a course up to Dix Cove, Axim, and Ampanes (King Blay's town), to try and get men to act as labourers. After much hard work and hard swearing, the official who came up with me and myself managed to ship off nearly 400, 51 of whom were women. You cannot possibly

imagine the howling row these people made. They were half starved, and clamouring for rice and biscuit. I had hardly started on my way down here in the ship, when a very heavy tornado passed over us, and the rain rather took the change out of them. Yesterday morning, however, they were again ravenous, and kicked up such a row—yelling, fighting, and so on, that I rigged a powerful pump, and with a length of hose and a branch pipe, very soon brought the mob into order; but the pump was kept rigged, and a man with the branch pipe in his hand stuck out from his side like the truncheon or baton usually shown in statues of Julius Cæsar, completely shut them up, poor beggars. I need hardly say that the ladies were not subjected to such a damper to their skins,—although the bouquet d'Afrique! Phew



Let me have plenty of letters from all of you. A post goes up every day, although the business will be nearly over, and we shall be coming down again by the time an answer comes to this. It is only a matter of some weeks; officers and men fare alike, or nearly so. I have had a small portable bedstead made to keep me off the ground. Officers only allowed 50 lb. weight of baggage—about half the quantity soldier officers are allowed—another subject for a growl. I'll now give you the line of march, and you see it will take eight days to get up to the Prah: Cape Coast Castle to Inquabim,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  miles; Inquabim to Acroful,  $6\frac{3}{4}$ ; thence to Yancoomassie (Fantee),  $10\frac{1}{2}$ ; thence to Mansu,  $11\frac{1}{2}$ ; thence to Sutah,  $10\frac{1}{2}$ ; thence to Yancoomassie (Assin),  $12\frac{1}{4}$ ; thence to Barraco,  $10\frac{1}{2}$ ; thence to Prahsu,  $7\frac{1}{2}$ ;—total,  $76\frac{1}{4}$  miles. I believe the very early morning is the time for being on the move, and we lie by all day this side of the river. We hear the Ashantees are quite demoralised, and will not attempt to make a stand. The troops are still at sea, cruising. I believe they do not land until the 1st or 2d January, much to their disgust. The 7th is the day named for crossing the river.

All hands are very keen and eager to be off. It would amuse you to see the shifts we are put to in keeping our traps under 50 lb. weight. Kroomen carry these things for us. I need hardly say that we are all getting very hard work indeed. Sundays generally turn out to be the heaviest working days in the week, and to-day is not much like a Christmas-day. It is simply wretched to see what miserable wretches we are fighting for. *From your Special Correspondent*, Naval Brigade, Sutah, 31st December 1873. Many happy New-Years to all of you! but none of us are going

to sit up to see this new one in. We landed at C. C. Castle at 3.30 A.M. of 27th December, every ship cheering in the dark their own parties as they left in tow of steam pinnaces. We are 17 officers, 208 blue-jackets, 50 marines, and about 200 Kroomen-bearers. Away we went, and marched to the first place, *Inquabim*, halting for ten minutes every hour. The men carried 70 rounds of ammunition each, one day's rations, full water-bottle, rifle, cutlass, and were pretty well loaded. The road is very good—undulating and pretty, with steep short hills. Just after getting to Inquabim the General arrived on his way to the front in a buggy drawn by niggers, and an equal number of niggers to ease him down over the hills. The appearance of the turn-out was peculiar. He got out and shook hands; did not wish to inspect the men; but as he was leaving, we all turned out, fell in, and gave him three rattling, hearty, good cheers. Encampment—small huts built of bamboo, and roofed with plantain leaves. We reached Inquabim at 7.30 A.M. Remained there until next morning. Sun *very* hot.

28th Dec., Sunday.—Until noon, we forgot it was Sunday; so you see what Vandals this bush work is making of us. Started at 5 A.M., having had cocoa and quinine, and reached our second encampment at 8 A.M. *Acroful*  $6\frac{3}{4}$  miles. Better huts than the last. A very heavy tornado, which regularly washed us out. The telegraph was in working order as far as this, and they are getting on as fast as possible with it. Slow and hard work for them to clear away the overhanging bush. Here we had fresh beef and bread! Our candles are very scarce, so we must go to bed early. *Monday, 29th.*—Off again at 5 A.M. I don't at all like this turning out every

morning at 4 A.M., getting the nigger-bearers into order, and marching off in the dark and thick fog. Every morning the fog is very dense, and the dews at night are most heavy. Mosquitoes bit hard last night—lizards ran over us. Old — felt one crawling over his legs, so gave a kick and sent the thing over to my legs; I gave a kick and the lizard has not been heard of since. Had soup before starting to-day. The forest gets thicker and the trees larger. More swamp crossed. The whole road was overhung by enormous bamboos. I never saw them growing to such a size. We passed one enormous cotton tree; it was indeed something to look at. These trees grow straight up without a branch, frequently to a height of 200 feet and more, and then up they go again to 350 or 400 feet. They are most magnificent giants of the forest primeval. At the lower part of their trunks are natural buttresses, which sometimes go up a height of 40 or 50 feet, and take most fantastic shapes as they disappear into the earth. The road still continues very good—10 feet wide on the average, I think. As day breaks, all nature wakes up. You hear the birds, but I defy you to see them in the dense forest. Arrived at *Dunqua* at 7.35 A.M., 6 miles on our way. — in command. He provided — and myself with a most acceptable breakfast. Old *Dunqua* was destroyed by the Ashantees long ago, but is now rebuilt. It was about four miles from this that Ferting had his fight with the Ashantees, and where poor Wilmot was killed. Started again at 3.45 P.M. Close and sultry, and although only  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles the men suffered much before we reached the next halting place, *Yancoomassie* (Fantee), at 4.30 P.M. The best huts we have been in yet. The first question always is,—

“Where do we wash, or is there a stream?” None here, so we had to do our best. I despatched my Krooman down to a little stream I had noticed on our way, with an empty beef-cask on his head, and he brought me back a most glorious tub of cold water. Heard tiger-cats in the forest all night. I heard and felt mosquitoes and ants all night. The ants are no joke; they are nearly an inch long, and give a very sharp bite, but it does no harm afterwards. As we go along, the different companies from the ships strike up songs in turn, and then the Kroomen strike up their monotonous chant, and then the blue-jackets mimic them, and then the “welkin rings” with shrieks of laughter, and always on marching into an encampment we strike up “Tramp, tramp,” or “John Brown,” or something else. One company had a concertina, but yesterday, as I didn’t hear it, I asked for it, and the owner came up looking very sheepish, and said, “Oh, beg pardon, sir, but that there blessed instrument has been and gone and busted.” *January 1, 1874: Yancoomassie.*—We had to wait for daylight this morning, as the road from Sutih is so very bad, over swamps and what they call “Corduroy Roads,” branches of trees, with large logs of timber above, and nothing is more trying than walking on this, with mud over the ankles. Last night hyenas and tiger-cats howling. But it is astonishing what a small amount of life is visible in the day time, except insects. We halted at a village about six miles from Sutih—bivouacked and breakfasted. Our fellows get their fires lighted now very quickly, after the halt is sounded and arms piled. I never saw such dismal swamps as those we crossed to-day. Such stinking mud. Enormous creepers hanging in grand festoons from the



great trees. We passed through an immense Ashantee encampment, which must have been pitched on their way *down*, large enough to hold 8000 or 10,000 men. Some small streams we passed over, and made the Kroomen bearers stand in them to cool their legs.

We arrived here at noon, after a most fatiguing march of 13 miles. To-morrow we march to Barraco, and Saturday to Prahsu on the Prah,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The total will then be 78 or 80 miles from Cape Coast Castle. Nights are very cold. I had to borrow another blanket at Mansu. Much to the disgust of the regiment there, they received orders to stay, although they were on the point of starting to the front, until we had passed. The troops are now all on their way up. Every little place is occupied every night; but the Naval Brigade shows the way. I have to drink my tea out of an old marmalade-pot; but, as long as I can get it, it doesn't matter what it's in. According to present arrangements, the Prah is to be crossed on the 7th or 8th of January, so we shall get three days' rest there. The old Argus, I hear, has gone up for more niggers.

*Prahsu, 8th January 1874.*—Started at the usual time. Better road than yesterday; same endless forest and jungle. Breakfasted at a deserted village, and arrived at the next halting-place. *Barraco*, distance  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles. I suppose these distances seem nothing to any of you at home, but the "closeness" is sometimes very hard to stand; not a breath of air can penetrate such dense jungles. Therefore, although the marches are not very long, yet, what with climate, carrying rifle, 70 rounds of ammunition, day's provisions, water-bottle, &c., the men feel it much. At Barraco we found the advanced party of our Brigade, who joined us, making a total of 21 officers,

183 bluejackets, 68 marines, and 212 Kroomen and labourers.

Saturday 3d, about 3 A.M., a hyena came prowling, making a most hideous row, and woke us all up. Left at 5 A.M., and arrived in camp at *Prahsu* about 8 A.M. The whole brigade marched in capitally; not a single man fell out during the whole march of seventy-seven miles, and the General complimented us very highly on our appearance. Deployed into line on the parade-ground, so that a swell messenger from King Coffee, who had arrived the previous day, might see for himself that white men were beginning to arrive, and that we are in earnest. As we marched in, I noticed the special artist of the 'Illustrated London News' sketching B—— and self as we led the way, and then I suppose he put the men in. Scarcely arrived, when Major K., the chief of the engineers, came and asked for men to assist him in building the bridge across the river. Of course he got what he wanted directly after they had breakfasted. A fine river, exactly sixty-five yards broad where the bridge crosses, swift stream, but falling daily, as we have had no rain for more than a week. Breakfasted with Colonel W., and dined with the General. The envoy is kept here until the bridge is finished to-morrow, and then he returns over it to Coomassie with a letter to Mr Coffee Kacallie. We have very snug lines in the camp, overlooking the river; banks about twenty feet high; very busy clearing away brush to create more ventilation, levelling ground, cutting down and thinning out trees, &c., &c. Sunday 4th, the envoy was shown the Gatling gun at work. It was fired up a reach of the river about 300 yards, and the effect was tremendous. I myself had not seen one fired before. The Ashantees would have bolted if they could, they

looked in a "blue funk"—in war time one may use a slang expression. 2d West India Regiment arrived here this morning. I had a present of two pairs of socks. I have had to write down for several little things I require, but I hear the Argus is gone up again to King Blay, who has been attacked at *Ampance* and lost three of his villages. The Encounter has also gone up to assist him; Amethyst gone down to the Volta, as G—— cannot keep the unfriendly tribes there from harassing his rear and cutting off supplies as he advances. B—— and I always go shares in a hut as usual. Monday, 5th.—Last night one of the Ashantee envoy's attendants committed *felo de se* by putting the muzzle of his gun under his chin and pulling the trigger with his toe; but, to show what stuff their powder is, the slugs did not even pass through the skull, and this afternoon the body was taken across the river and buried in Ashantee country: a strange coincidence that the first Ashantee to cross the bridge should be a dead one. There are all kinds of yarns flying about that fetishmen are prophesying the fall of the Ashantee kingdom, and a dozen other such ridiculous stories, although there is every probability of their proving to be true. Tuesday, 6th.—Major R—— and his levies crossed yesterday. This morning at six, Naval Brigade marched across the bridge into Ashantee territory—the first European troops who have ever done so. We were ordered to go about three miles, when the Coomassie envoy would pass us, and would be able to report that "white man" is on road to Coomassie. He was properly escorted, and passed while we halted in Bush path, the only track. They were all on foot, and the fellows looked grim (or as grim as

they *could* look) with fright. We let him go well on with his escort, and then returned here. I wished the nigger "au revoir à Coomassie," a compliment which he properly acknowledged with a flourish of his 'chowrie,' or fly brush. He wore on his breast a square bit of wood with a thin covering of gold on it—something in the "Ephod" style. I had a capital header and swim in the river yesterday. The Harmattan season has regularly set in. The nights are *very* cold; even at 6.30 this morning the thermometer was barely 60°. One has to turn in with all clothes on, and I don't know what I should do without the extra blanket I borrowed. Transport of provisions is *the* great stumbling-block. These brutal Fantees bolt if they only have the chance, and the night before last 400 of them deserted *en masse*. The General is now going to try what can be done in the way of gentle persuasion by powder and ball. Both 1st and 2d West India regiments have been turned into carriers, much to their disgust. We expect part of the Rifle Brigade here tomorrow, and that's all I have to say at present. Yesterday and to-day we are busy clearing away bush on north side of river to make room for the "tête-du-pont," in which among other things will be placed all the *bearers*, so that they will not be able to bolt. It is so difficult to get these bearers or carriers that we can only get a newspaper up by chance.

*Prahsu, 15th January 1874.*—Still at this blessed place, I'm sorry to say, and most heartily sick of it we all are. It can't be helped, however, because the transport almost broke down, and that I think I mentioned before. The so-called king of one of our so-called "friendly tribes" was going to be shot for allowing his people to bolt, but the



General will not allow that, so he is only going to be hanged "pour encourager les autres." Even the 23d regiment has been carrying provisions up part of the way! I finished my last on the 8th instant, enclosing sketch of bridge, &c. So now I will continue my yarn about nothing.

We have been, as usual, very busy in clearing away bush, &c., in all directions, and it is almost an endless job. There is now in camp an alligator about three feet long; somebody picked it up off the bank of the river, and they are trying to tame it. I saw it yesterday, and a more miserable living specimen of a reptile, or whatever you like to call it, I never saw. Last Sunday evening, to my disgust, I found a small cotton tree, close to our huts, on fire inside; tried to cut it down before dark, but failed and waited for daylight, sending our men away into other huts for safety, as we were not sure which way it would fall, it was so exactly upright, and we only had a very small line. It was only a very small specimen, just a hundred feet to the lowest branch, and about another fifty feet to the top. In the morning, however, down he came with a tremendous crash. In the evening the General inspected us, and appeared much pleased with the general physique of the men. 13th January. —One of the German missionaries came in from Coomassie. He had been up there as a prisoner for five years, and looked more like a rat than anything else. He says he is so accustomed to see the horrors and executions up there, that he thought nothing of them. The king used to allow him 4½ dollars subsistence money for every forty days, where-with he invested in rice and snails. The snails here are different from those things we used to kill in our garden at G——. Enormous things

they are, and the shells are spiral and pointed at the ends. The natives dry them on small strips for sale, and they look like small and very inferior figs and dirt about them. Although we are inactive, still the native levies are pushing on and cutting roads for us. The first party belongs to Wood's Regiment of levies under Lord Gifford; then Major Russell's mob, then yesterday 200 of the 2d West India Regiment crossed, and to-morrow Wood goes on to prepare for the Europeans. Of course a large party of Engineers are also in advance. Rait and his artillery go also to-morrow. These consist of Houssas, and I dare say may do well.

Last night we made up an immense bonfire, felled a lot of trees for seats around it, got the whole Naval Brigade out to sing, and then invited the special artist of 'Illustrated London News' to come and make a sketch of the scene, which he did. If it is put in, as I suppose it will be, and put in well, it will make a good picture. Then we sent up to the General and Staff to say the "Naval Brigade was at home," and it was nearly 10 o'clock before we turned in—a late hour in these parts.

Did you ever hear of wild-ducks sitting in trees? No; neither did I, until I was told of it by two or three officers who saw them in the morning yesterday. They frequently fly across a long way up; and geese we sometimes see. I'm sorry to say I've not as yet been able to pick up any trophies or curiosities; however, I hope to, at Coomassie. By the way, the members of the Press are furious because the General will not allow them to interview the missionary. I don't know what information he has brought down, but I saw most of the correspondents yesterday, and that one of the 'Standard' was beside himself with

rage and prickly heat. I hear to-day that the Rifles are to be here on the 20th, 42d on the 22d, headquarters of 23d Regiment and 100 men to be here on 23d, and the advance on the 25th; but goodness knows it may all be altered again before that.

*Wednesday Evening.*—This missionary says that King Coffee does not seem at all inclined to fight. In fact, only about 20,000 out of 40,000 recrossed the river, the remainder dying from starvation and sickness. It seems to be the general opinion that there will be no fighting, and it is rumoured that the King is willing to accede to all the General's demands, except going into Coomassie itself; but it was the same at Pekin, and of course Sir Garnet can't go back without going there; it is the only punishment Mr Coffee will really feel. The missionary says that he is not such a drunken sweep as he is represented, and the liquor he likes best is champagne; and small blame to him, say I, particularly if he has seltzer also: what wouldn't I give at this moment for a long drink! The advance guard will be on the Adansi Hills to-morrow. How glad I shall be when we are on our way back. The cold nights have passed off, and are succeeded by very close and

stuffy ones, and in the middle of the day the heavy close atmosphere is almost unbearable. L. W—— died of *yellow fever*. It commenced with the ordinary fever, and the Biapa, the ship he went in, was infected with yellow fever, caught at Congo or Bonny. Some of those steamers have behaved shamefully, contracting yellow Jack down in the Bights and then receiving passengers at Cape Coast, declaring they had no infectious disease on board. I can name two, if not three cases. We are all very sorry to hear of his death. I believe Glover and Butler have crossed the Prahat two different points, and are also advancing. We have not had a drop of rain for more than a fortnight now, which is a blessing. I am sorry to tell you that my *valet* Krooboy has got so aristocratic that he won't answer to his name "Jem Will," but comes directly I say "James William," and that is such a mouthful to get out in this weather. I wish Sir Garnet would make one more stipulation with the Ashantees, and I am not alone in saying so, viz.—that they should immediately collect all their fighting men and come down after we leave and *exterminate* UTTERLY these brutes of Fantees. They are fifty times worse than any Ashantee.

[We have been disappointed in receiving the rest of this Journal, but hope to give it in our next.]



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THE STORY OF VALENTINE ;

AND HIS BROTHER.

PART V.—CHAPTER XIII.

THE school that Valentine Ross, Lord Eskside's grandson and heir, was sent to was, naturally, Eton. His father had been educated there, but not his grandfather, who belonged to an older fashion in education as in everything else, and was Scotch to his fingers' tips, and to every shade of idea in his mind. Valentine was placed with the brother of the tutor who had succeeded so indifferently with his early training—a kind of mingled compensation for that failure, and keeping up of old associations—for Mr Grinder's father had been Richard's tutor—which satisfied Lord and Lady Eskside. The boy's departure was no small trial to the old people. Each of them said something to him privately before he went away. Lord Eskside took him out for a last walk, and showed him the new feus that had been marked out, and told him confidentially—recognising for the first time his partially grown-up condition—

of the improvements he had been making, and the additions to the rent-roll of the estate which the feus would make—"enough to pay your school expenses, Val," he said ; and then he gave his grandson his parting advice.

"You have not to make your living by learning," said the old lord, "therefore I don't bid you give every moment to it that health allows ; but a good scholar is always a credit to every rank in life ; and if a thing is worth doing at all, it's worth doing well. But there are other things at Eton besides books. A man in the position you will hold should know men like himself—not only the outside of them, but their ways of thinking, and what's working in their heads. The working of young heads is a sign how the tide's going ; and I want you, if it's in you, Val, some time or other, to go on the top of the tide—not just to be dragged with the swing of it, like common lads. You're too

young for that at present, but when you're old enough you must try to get into what societies they have—debating, or the like. I don't know very well what you're going to turn to. You have good abilities—very good abilities—and plenty of spirit when you like ; and mind, to give all that over to play, and nonsense games, is bairnly, not manly—I would have you recollect that."

"Do you mean cricket, grand-papa?" said Valentine, with astonished eyes.

"I mean everything that turns a gentleman into a player, sir," said the old lord, knitting his brows ; "setting sport above the honest concerns of this life and the ruling of the world—which is what young men of good family are born for, if they like to put their hand to their work. To set up a game in the highest place is bairnly, Val—mind what I say to you—and not manly. If you mean to put your life into cricket, you had better make up your mind to earn your bread by it, and give up the other trade I'm speaking of—which is not to say you may not play to amuse yourself," he added, dropping from the seriousness of the previous address, "and, in moderation, as much as you like ; only never make a business of a mere pleasure. I am taking you into my confidence," Lord Eskside continued, after a little pause. "I want you to go into public life. Your father will not, and he has his reasons, which are perhaps good enough ; and I had not the time nor the possibility when I was young like you. I succeeded early for one thing ; and a Scotch representative peer does not cut much of a figure in politics. But you, my boy, have little chance of succeeding early. If your father lives to be as old as I am, you have a long career before you—and you'll mind my advice."

"Yes, grandpapa," said the boy, bewildered. Valentine was proud, yet much confounded, to be thus advanced to the position of his grandfather's confidant, and spoken to as if he were on the verge of the university, instead of entering at fourteen a public school. He did his best to understand, with eyes intent upon the old man's face.

"The secret of all success, Val," said the old lord, "is to know how to deny yourself. It does not matter very much what the object is. That's one advantage about even these games I was speaking of. Training, as they call it, is a good thing, an excellent thing. If you once learn to get the whip-hand of yourself, that's the best education. There is nothing in this world like it, Val. Prove to me that you can control yourself, and I'll say you're an educated man ; and without this, all other education is good for next to nothing. Other people, no doubt, can do you harm more or less, but there is no living creature can do you the harm yourself can. I would write that up in gold letters on every school, if I had it in my power. Not that I like asceticism—far from it—but a man is no man that cannot rule himself."

Lord Eskside paused with a sigh, while the boy looked at him with eyes and ears intent, taking in the words, but not all or indeed much of their meaning. And here I think Val's attention began to wane a little ; for he had not the slightest clue to the thoughts into which the old man plunged, almost against his will—the dismal recollections of shipwreck which crowded into his mind as he spoke. "We won't enter into the subject at length," he resumed ; "but, Val, you have more than ordinary occasion to be upon your guard."

"Why have I more than ordinary occasion?" said the boy, wonder-



ing and curious; this mysterious intimation immediately roused him up.

"Ah, well, we'll say nothing about that. You've wild blood in you, my boy; and when you're a man, you'll remember that I gave you sound advice. These are the great things, Val. I don't need to tell you to be good, for I hope you know your duty. Try and never do anything that you would think shame to have told to us; you may be sure sooner or later that it will be told to us, and to every soul you want it kept from. There's no such thing as a secret in this world; and the more you want to hide a thing the more it's known—mind that. For lesser matters, I'll see you have enough of pocket-money, and I hope you'll take care to spend it like a gentleman—which does not mean to throw it away with both hands, mind; and you'll keep your place, and learn your lessons like a man; and you'll write regularly to your grandma; and God bless you, Val!"

Saying this, the old lord wrung the boy's hand, and turned off down a side path, leaving him alone in the avenue. Lord Eskside's shaggy eyebrows were working, and something strangely like tears welled up somehow from about his heart, and stood in two pools, unsheddable, under these penthouses. Not for all he had in the world would he have let that moisture drop in sight of living man.

Val was somewhat startled by this abrupt withdrawal, and tried hard, without being quite able, to make it out, what it meant; for the notion that he himself was supremely loved by his old grandfather was one that did not immediately enter into the boy's mind, far from all sentimental consciousness as boys' minds generally are. He went up thoughtfully to the house, but I am afraid

it was not the wisdom of his grandfather's advice or the contagion of his emotion which moved him. He was wondering what it meant—why *he*, Valentine, should have more than ordinary reason to take care; and what was the wild blood he had in his veins? The wonder was vague; I cannot say that the boy was possessed by any eager longing to penetrate the mystery; but still he wondered, having arrived at a kind of crisis in his life, a thing which makes even a child think. He went in to his grandmother serious, and, as she thought, sad; and Lady Eskside was pleased by the cloud over his face, and set it down to his sorrow at leaving home, putting her own sentiments into Valentine's mind, as we all do.

"You must not be down-hearted, Val," she said, drawing him close to her, and speaking with a quiver in her lip. "When once the shock is over, you will find plenty of new friends, and be very happy. It is natural at your age. It is us that will miss you—oh my bonnie boy!—far, far more than you will miss my old lord and me."

Val did not say anything; he felt his breast swell with a certain soft sympathy, but he was not deeply dismayed at the thought of leaving home, as she supposed. Lady Eskside put her arm round him, and drew her boy close. She was not ashamed of the tears that came heavily to her eyes.

"My bonnie boy!" she said, "my darling! Ye cannot think what you have been to us, Val—like light to them in darkness; you've made God's providence clear to me, though you're too young to understand why. When you are away, Val, you'll think of that. If anything ill were to happen to you in body or soul, it would break my heart—you'll re-

member that? Oh, my own boy, be good! There are all kinds at a great school, some not innocent lads like you. You'll shut your ears to bad words and wicked things for my sake? Don't listen to them—but say your prayers night and morning, and read your chapter, and God will protect my boy. Nobody can make you do wrong, Val, except yourself."

"But I don't mean to do wrong, grandma," said Valentine, with a little self-assertion. "Why should you think I would? Is there anything particular about me?"

"There is a great deal particular about you," said the old lady; "you are the hope and the joy of two old folk that would never hold up their heads again in this world if any harm came to you. Is not that enough? But I am not afraid of my boy," she added, seeing that the admonition had gone far enough, and smiling a wintry, watery smile, the best she could muster. "Mind all that Mr Grinder says too, and don't be too rough in your plays. You're a very stirring boy, Val; but I want my boy to be always a gentleman, and not too rough. Your manners are not so nice as they once were——"

"I'm not a baby any longer," said the boy. "I don't know how to speak to ladies and grand people; but I don't mean to be rough."

"Well, dear, perhaps that is true," said Lady Eskside, with a sigh; "but you'll mind, Val, to be very particular about your manners as well as other things. It's more important than you think."

"I wish you would tell me something, grandma," said Val; "why is it more important than I think? and what do grandpapa and you mean by saying that I need to be on my guard more than others? There must be something particular about me."

"Then your grandpapa has been speaking to you!" said the old lady, with a little vexation, feeling herself forestalled. "I suppose, being old, we are more particular than most people, and more anxious. Your father, you see, makes no such fuss."

"I don't know anything about my father, grandma."

"Oh, Val, hush! he is at a distance, where duty keeps him; he has never been at home but that once since you came, and he is not a good correspondent; but now that you are at school you must write to him direct, and be sure he will answer. He knows you are safe in our hands."

"That may be," said Val, seriously; "but still, you see, grandma, it's a fact that I don't know much about my father—nor my mother either," he added, suddenly dropping his voice. Since he had been a small child, he had not mentioned her before. Lady Eskside could not restrain a startled movement, which he felt, standing so close to her. The boy lifted his eyes and fixed them on her face.

"Was that her, grandma," he said in a low voice, "that brought me here? and why is she never here now? I know there is something strange about me, for all you say."

"Do you remember her, Val?"

"No," said the boy, somewhat impatiently; "that is, I remember her, but not to know her now if I saw her. Why do you never speak of her? why is she never here? I think I ought to know."

"Oh, my dear, it's a long story—a long and a sad story," said the old lady. "I wish—I wish I could find her, Val. I have sought for her everywhere, both now and when you were born; but I cannot find her. It is not our fault."

"Where is she?" said the boy. His face was flushed and agitated,



his utterance hurried and breathless as if with shame.

"I tell you we cannot find her, Val."

"But she is alive, in the world, *like that?*" said the boy; and drew a long painful breath. Lady Eskside could not tell, and dared not ask, how much Val understood or remembered of his mother and her life when he said these words; and indeed, I think the boy himself would have found it very difficult to tell. He had lost all clear recollection of her in those seven years past, which were just the years in which a child forgets most easily, or remembers most tenaciously, when its recollections are encouraged and cultivated. He recollected dimly his coming to Eskside, and more dimly a life beyond, which was not as his present life,—a curious dull chaos of wanderings and change, with a woman in it, and a playfellow, for whom he used to cry of nights. The chief impression on his mind, however, was of the strange difference between that life and his present one. He had escaped out of that into this; and the thought of being made to go back again filled him with a vague alarm. If this woman was his mother, might she not meet him somewhere, claim him, take him back again? This thought filled him with a confused and indescribable horror. He had experienced this strange feeling before now; when he saw caravans passing—when he met a wandering party of tramps on the road—it had occurred to him more than once, what if some one should claim him? though he scarcely knew the ground of his own fears. This had given a curious inarticulate duality to his life. There were two of him. One Valentine Ross, whom he could identify boldly, who was happy and free and beloved—the other, something he did not know. But after

his conversation with his grandmother, this vague terror suddenly took shape and form. His mother, his *real* mother, who had a right to him, might claim him, might seize upon him and carry him away. The idea filled him for the moment with mortal terror. He lost the security of childhood, and for the time felt himself involved in that insecurity, that panic, which is more terrible to a child than it ever can be in more mature life. A spasm came into his throat—a pang of shame and outraged feeling—which added to the terror, and made it very hard to bear. His eyes grew wet with a hot-springing moisture, salt and bitter, which seemed to scorch his eyelids. Lady Eskside, partially discovering the agitation in the boy's mind, pressed him closer to her in sympathy and tenderness; but he set his elbow square, and repulsed the fond consoling movement. He was angry with her and with all the world, because he himself was thus separated from all the world, though he was no more than a child.

"I am going out," he said, abruptly, with a slight struggle to be free, "to say good-bye to Hunter and the rest. I promised to say good-bye to them. Let me go, grandma; I shall not be long away."

"Come back before dinner, dear. You are to have your dinner with us to-night," said the old lady, kissing his hot forehead as she let him go. He ran from her, and out into the woods, and never drew breath till he reached Hunter the gamekeeper's cottage, which was two miles off. The hot tears dried in the boy's eyes as he ran, swift as an arrow from the bow. It was a half-savage way of relieving the pain in him; yet it did relieve it, probably because of the half-savage blood which was boiling in his veins. He did not feel quite sure

that he was safe even in the woods, and flew as if some one were pursuing him. In this panic there mingled no curiosity about his mother—no longing wish to see her—no stirring of filial love, such as one would imagine natural in such a case. Strangely enough, children show little curiosity in most cases about the parents they have lost. It seems so natural to them to accept what is, as absolutely unchangeable, the one only state of affairs they have ever known, as the state which must be, and to which there is no alternative. The very idea of an alternative disturbs the young mind, and wounds it. And Valentine had more than ordinary cause to be disturbed. He was afraid and he was ashamed of that duality in his existence. It mortified him as only a child can be mortified. If he could only forget it, shut it out of his mind for ever! He did not want to hear any more upon the subject, which was hateful to him; he could not bear even to think that any one was aware how much of it he knew. The sight of the little colony of children and dogs at the gamekeeper's was a wholesome distraction to his burdened mind; and fortunately there were many people to be shaken hands with, and to be told of his start to-morrow. "To Edinburgh first, and then to London! My word, Mr Valentine, but you'll be far afore us all, country folk. And I wouldna wonder but you would see the Queen and the House of Parliament, and a' thing that's splendid," said the gamekeeper's wife. The boy was pleased; the thought of all the novelty to come moved him for a moment; but even the delight of novelty could not banish from his mind his new horror and fear.

He dined with his grand-parents that night as they had promised;

and the old people watched him with an anxious scrutiny, of which the child was vaguely conscious. They had no insight into the tempest that was surging in his childish bosom, but watched him as wistfully as if they had been the children and he the man, wondering whether "his mother's blood" was working in him, and any wild desire of adventure and vagrancy like her's arising in his mind, or whether he was thinking of and longing for her, which seemed the most natural supposition. I think had they known the selfish shame and fear which had taken possession of him, both of them would have been disappointed and shocked, even though satisfied. They would have blamed the boy as without natural feeling, and they would have been wrong. The feeling in Valentine's heart was all chaotic, undeveloped. He had found out what was the meaning of the contradiction of two natures in him, the jar of which he had been dimly conscious, without knowing what it was. The struggle itself had been going on within him for years, since the time when a mere child he had suffered and conquered that natural thirst for the out-of-door life to which he had been born. He had stood by his nursery window and gazed out, and beaten his head and his hands against the panes, longing to escape, with a longing which was only recognised as naughtiness, and which by force of circumstances and some innate force of nature he had restrained. The ductile infantine nature had been forced into the new channel, and now thought of the old one with a thrill and shiver of imaginative terror. But no chance light as yet pierced the childish imbroglia of his thoughts. He felt rather than thought that he was in danger; he had lost his happy sense of security; but his mind



had not gone further. All this, however, was as invisible, as unrevealable, to the two old people, who watched him so anxiously, as their eager watch was to him. He had not left their charge for a day for seven long years, and yet they knew as little of him as you and I, dear reader, know of the child who has never left our side, and has, as it seems, no thought, no object in life apart from ours. How can we tell what that unknown familiar creature will do when set out upon independent life for itself? and how could they tell what was passing in Val's bosom, which had no window to it, any more than have the rest of us? They watched him, consulting each other now and then with their eyes, and said things to him which meant more than the words, but which Val received without thinking at all what they meant. That last night at home was meant to be a solemn one, and would have been so, had Val's mind not been absorbed in its own excitement. Lord Eskside gave him a watch, which made his heart jump for the moment—a gold hunting-watch, such as Val had long admired and longed for, with his initials and crest on the back; but even this affected him much less than it would have done, had he received it a week—a day before. He was to start early the next morning, and his portmanteaus were packed, and everything ready that night. He went and looked at them before he went to bed, and the higher pulsation of novelty and adventure began to swell in his young veins. The shadow slid still a little further off his heart when Lady Eskside came into his room on her way to her own, as she had done every night for years. Val was not asleep, but only pretended to be so, to avoid any self-betrayal. The boy, peering curiously through his eyelashes,

which showed him this little scene as through a veil of tinted gauze, saw the old lady put down her candle, look at him closely, and when she saw him, as she thought, fast asleep, kneel down by his bedside. She said no audible words, but she put her hands together and lifted her face, with tears standing full in her eyes. It was all Val could do not to cry too, and betray himself; the water came welling up, feeling warm within his eyelids, and blurring out the sight before him. After a little while my lady rose, and put her hand softly on his forehead and kissed him; then took up her candle and walked softly away, closing the door carefully after her not to wake her boy. Val felt strangely desolate for the first moment after the door closed, and the soft light and the watchful presence went away. He did not say anything tender within himself, for he was (or had become) a Scotch boy, totally unused to the employment of endearing words. But his small heart swelled, and a sense of soft security, of watchers round him, and ever-wakeful all-powerful love, came to him unawares. He fell asleep directly, and woke in the morning cured of his first trouble, with as light a heart as any schoolboy need have—the shock having gone off with all its consequences, and his mind being too full of his new start, of his new watch, of his long journey—the first he had ever taken—and of Eton at the end, most wonderful of all,—far too full of these things to be sad. He gave his grandmother a hug when the moment came to go away. "I'll be back at Christmas, grandma," he said, between laughing and crying. The old lord was going with his heir, and this "broke the parting very much, so that he bore up like a man," Lady Eskside said afterwards, wishing, I fear, that Val

had been a little more "overcome." She shed tears enough for both of them after the carriage had driven away, with a large box of game—to conciliate Mr Grinder—fastened on behind. From the window of one of the turrets she could see it driving across the bridge at Lasswade; and there she went, though the

stairs tired her, and waved her handkerchief out of the narrow window, and wept at thought of the dreariness he left behind him. It seemed to my lady that there was not one creature left in the great house, or on Eskside, up the water and down the water, save herself: and thus Val made his first start in life.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

The boy was very tired when he arrived in London, and not capable of the hot interest he expected to feel in the great muddy capital, which was one muddle of mean houses, noisy roads, carts and carriages, and crowding people, to his tired perceptions. The day after, he and his grandfather went to Windsor through the mild soft country, half veiled in the "mists and mellow fruitfulness" that distinguish autumn, and warm with the all-pervading and diffused sunshine of the season. How different was the calm slow river, lingering between its placid banks, seeking no coy concealment under cliff or tree, but facing the daylight with gentle indifference, from the wild shy Esk, which played at hide-and-seek with the sunshine, like a flying nymph among the woods! The old lord seemed half inspired by this return to scenes which he remembered so well, though he had not been himself brought up at Eton. "I brought your father here, as I'm bringing you," he said, as they rolled along, round the curves of the railway, looking out upon the distant castle and the river. "You will see plenty of boats on the river in another day, my boy; and if your grandma and I come here next summer, I daresay we shall see you strutting along in all your finery, with flowers in your hat, and a blue shirt." Innocent

old lord! he thought his little rustic, just out of the nest, might reach the celestial heights of Eton in a few months, and perhaps—for what limits are there to the presumption of ignorance?—find a place in the Eight in his first summer. But, indeed, I don't really think Lord Eskside's ignorance went so far as this. He said it, not knowing what else to say, to please the boy. They went down together to the great dame's house, full already of small boys settling into their familiar quarters, upon whom Val looked with all the wondering envy and respect natural to a freshman. He had himself assumed the tall hat for the first time in his life, and the sight of so many tall hats moving about everywhere confused yet excited him. His tutor, who was not his "dame," lived in a tiny house attached to a big pupil-room, and had no accommodation for boys, or for much else, except the blue-and-white china in which his soul delighted. Mr Gerald Grinder, like his brother Mr Cyril Grinder, who had been Val's tutor at Eskside, had one of the finest minds of his time; but the chief way in which this made itself evident to the outer world was in his furniture, and the fittings-up of his little house, every "detail" in which he flattered himself was a study. It was a very commonplace little house, but the thought that had been expended



on its decoration might have built pyramids—if anything so rude and senseless as building pyramids could have occurred to the refined intelligence of a man of Mr Gerald Grinder's day. Val gazed at all the velvet brackets, and all the antique cabinets (which had been "picked up" in holiday travels all over the world, and were each the subject for a tale), and all the china, with a sense of failing breath and space too small for him; while his grandfather engaged Mr Grinder in conversation, and pointed out the boy's peculiarities, as if these characteristics could be of any particular interest to any one out of Val's own family—and the young tutor listened with a smile. "I don't doubt we shall soon know each other," he said suavely, and shook hands with Val, and dismissed him: to receive just such a description of another boy next moment from another anxious parent. "Whether is it Ross or Smith now, that is the self-willed one, and which is the boy that catches cold?" the young tutor asked himself, when the audience was over. He concluded, finally, that the latter case must be Smith's since he was brought by his mother—a generalisation which perhaps was justifiable. Poor Mr Grinder! he knew all the marks of his china as well as these tiresome people knew, so to speak, the manufacturer's marks on their boys; but how much more interesting was one than the other! He took a walk up to an old furniture shop, where bargains of precious ware were now and then to be had, with a delicious sense of relief when it was too late to expect more pupils, and fell upon a bit of real Nankin there which refreshed his very soul.

Meanwhile the old lord and his boy strayed about the narrow streets. They went to the bookseller's and bought pictures for Val's room—

which, I need not say, were chiefly Landseers, though, granting the subject, Val was not particular as to the artist—and then they walked to the castle, the grandfather making a conscientious but painful attempt to remember who built the Round Tower, and who was responsible for St George's Chapel. As to these points, however, or as to the other, Val was not at all exacting, and had no thirst for information. He liked to walk on the terrace better, where the great sunny misty plain before him made his young heart expand with a delightful sense of space and distance, but did not care for the splendid alleys of the Long Walk, which were too formal to please his ill-regulated fancy. And then they went to the river, along the green bank of the Brocas, which touched Lord Eskside's heart with many recollections. "I have walked with your father here fifty times, I should think," said the old lord. "He was not much of a boating man himself, but he was fond of the river. Your father had always what is called a fine mind, Val."

"What is a fine mind?" said the boy, who did not know very much about his father, or care a great deal, if the truth must be told.

"It's rather hard to define," said the old lord, "when you don't possess the article; and you must not learn to generalise too much, my boy; it's a dangerous custom. It is, so far as I've been able to remark, an intellect which pays more attention to the small things than the great in this life; it cares for what it calls the details, and lets the bigger matters shift for themselves."

"Was my father—very good at anything?" asked Val, whom this definition interested but moderately. He had some difficulty in shaping his question; for indeed, having

just heard that his father was not a boating man, his curiosity was partially satisfied before expressed.

"Your father has very good abilities," said Lord Eskside—"very good abilities. I wish he would put them to more use. I've been told he was an elegant scholar, Val."

"What is an elegant scholar, grandpa?"

The old lord laughed. "Not me nor you," he said; "and I doubt if either you or me are the stuff to make one of; but your father was. I'll show you an old school-list at home with his name in it. I've heard his Latin verses were something very fine indeed; Val, Latin verses are grand things. Poetry in English is a thriftless sort of occupation; but a dead language makes all the difference. If you ever can make Latin verses like your father, you'll be a great man, Val."

Val never knew whether his grandfather was laughing at him when he adopted this tone. "Is my father a great man?" he asked, with a serious face. "I should like to know a little more about him. I have only seen him once. Once is not much for a fellow to have seen his father; and I was so small then, and never thought of anything."

"Most of us are just as well without thinking," said Lord Eskside, with a suppressed sigh, "except about your work, my boy. You may be sure you will want all your thoughts for your work."

"That is just how you always turn me off," said Val. "I ask you about my father, grandpa, and you tell me about my work. I will do my work," said the boy, with a dogged air, which he sometimes put on; "but why does my father never come home?—why doesn't he care for me? All these fellows there are

with their fathers. I like you a great deal better—but *why* doesn't he come?"

"Because he likes his own way," said the old lord, "better than he likes you or me—better than he likes his own country or our homely life. Observe, my boy, this is nothing for you to judge, or make your remarks upon," he added, bending his brows at Val, who was not used to be looked on frowningly. "Your father is no boy like you, but a man, and able to judge for himself. His profession takes him abroad. He will be an ambassador one of these days, I suppose, and represent his sovereign—which is more honour than often falls to the lot of a poor Scots lord."

Val did not make any reply, and the pair continued their walk along the river-side. His father a representative of his sovereign; his mother—. For the last time before he was engulfed by the practical schoolboy life which was more congenial to his years, Val felt the whirl of wonder, the strange chaos of his double life which was made up of such different elements, and lay as it were between two worlds. His panic was gone, having worn itself out, and no real interest in his unknown mother kept her image before him; but he felt the jar in him of these two existences, so strangely, widely separated. His head felt giddy, as if the world were turning round with him. But every moment the river was becoming more gay and bright, and the moving panorama before him after a while overcame his individual reflections. The "fellows" newly arrived were already crowding down to the river—little new boys standing about with their hands in their pockets looking wistfully on; but the old *habitués* of the Thames asserted their superiority, and got afloat in swarms—some in the



strange outriggers which Val had heard of, but had never seen before. Lord Eskside was as eager about the sight as if it had been he who was the new boy. "Look how light they are, Val!" he cried—"how cleverly they manage them! If those long oars get out of balance the thing upsets. Look at that small creature there no bigger than yourself—"

"Bigger! he's not up to my elbow," cried Val, indignant.

"Well, smaller than yourself: but you could not do that, you lout, to save your life."

Val's face grew crimson. "Come back next week, grandpa," he said, "and see if I can't; or come along, I'll try now: it would only be a ducking—and what do I care for a ducking? I'll try this very day."

"Come back, come back, my boy; they won't let you try to-day," cried the old lord, laughing at the boy's impetuosity. Val had turned back, and was rushing down to the "rafts" where boats were to be had; and it was all that his grandfather could do to restrain him. "You are not, Val Ross, your own master—not to speak of other people's—here," he said, holding the boy by the arm, "but a member of a corporation, and you must obey the laws of it. They'll not give you a boat, or if they do, it will be because they think you don't belong to Eton; and if you were to go out without fulfilling all the regulations, they'd punish you, Val."

"Punish me!" cried Val, with nostrils dilating, and a wild fire in his eyes.

"Ay, punish *you*, though you are such a great man. This will never do," said Lord Eskside; "do you mean to struggle with me, sir, in the sight of all these lads? Master yourself! and that at once."

The boy came to himself with a gasp, as if he had been drowning.

I don't think he had ever in his life been spoken to in so severe a voice. He ceased to resist, and the old lord gave up his hold on his arm, and continued in a lower tone—

"You must learn this lesson, my boy, at once. You are nobody here, and you must master yourself. Do it of your own will, and you show the makings of a man. Do it because you are compelled, and what are you but a slave? The thing is in your own hands, Val," said Lord Eskside, softened, and putting off his peremptory tone; "you have almost made an exhibition, before all these strange lads, of yourself—and me."

Val did not say anything; his breast was swelling high, his heart throbbing with the effort he had made; and he was not pleased that he had been obliged to make the effort, nor did he feel that satisfaction in having done his duty which is said always to attend that somewhat difficult operation. He walked along the river-side panting and drawing his breath hard, as if he really had tried the experiment of a ducking. How he longed to do this thing which he had been assured he must not do! He would have liked to jump into the river and swim out to one of the long slim boats, poised like big dragonflies on the water, and eject its rower, and take the vacant place; in which case, no doubt, Val would have come to signal grief, as he would have deserved—for he had never been in an outrigger in his life.

Then the pair went and dined at the hotel, where Val recovered his spirits; and then the old lord took the boy to his little room, where they found his things unpacked, and his pictures standing in a little heap against the wall, and his room almost filled up with the bed which

had been folded up out of the way when they were there before. It was not like the luxurious large airy room which had been Val's at home, any more than the house with its long passages, with regiments of doors on either side, was like the old-fashioned arrangements of Rosseraig. And here at last the parting so often rehearsed had to be done in earnest. "Master yourself," said the old lord, with a voice which was neither so cheery nor so firm as he meant it to be ; "and God bless you, Val !" And then he was gone, walking up the dark street with a heavy heart in his old bosom, and his eyebrows working furiously. And Val sat down upon his bed and looked round him wonderingly, and for the first time realised that he was left alone.

However, it is useless to enter upon the details of so very common a scene. Perhaps the boy shed a few tears silently when the maid took away his candle, and he felt that no soft step, subdued lest he should be sleeping, no rustling silken garments, could come into his room that night. In the morning he faced his new existence vigorously, and hung his pictures, and began his work without any weakness of recollection. The old people felt it a great deal more, and a great deal longer ; but Val could not have been known from the most accustomed and habitual schoolboy, and stranger still, scarcely knew himself for anything else after that night. At the end of the week he felt as if he had lived there all his life—as if he had been there before in some previous kind of existence. I suppose this readiness of a child to adapt itself to new habits, and make them its own, does but increase the strange unreality of life itself to the half-conscious mind—life which changes in a moment, so that one week seems like years, and years, being

past, look as if they had never been.

At the end of the week Val wrote home ; and in his first letter there was this paragraph, written in his clearest hand :—

"Tell grandpapa I rowed up to Surly Hall, a long way above where we walked, above locks, *in an outrigger*, this morning. I rowed another fellow and licked him. I passed swimming on Thursday, and *outriggers is very easy*. You have nothing to do but keep steady, and it flies like a bird."

"What is an outrigger?" said Lady Eskside, as she gave her husband the letter. The old lord gave an internal shiver, and thanked heaven that she did not remember ; and Val did not think it necessary to inform his anxious grand-parents how often he had swamped his little craft on the Friday, before he succeeded in making that triumphal progress to Surly on Saturday morning. "He's a determined rascal, that boy of yours, my lady," was all the answer Lord Eskside made.

I would not assert, however, that Val found all his difficulties at school to be surmounted so easily as the outrigger. He had to go through the average number of accidents and perils, and overcome various wild stirrings of nature within him, before he learned, as a true Etonian does, to take pride in the penalties and hardships as well as the pleasures which distinguish his school. Val's natural pride in his own person as Val Ross had to be met and routed by his artificial and conventional pride as a schoolboy, before, for instance, he could reconcile himself to be some one's fag, a fate which overtook him instantly. Little Lord Hightowers, the Duke's son, who was in the same house, took to it naturally, without any stirring of repugnance, and made his master's



toast with conscientious zest, and went his master's errands, and accepted his share of the dainties he had fetched when that potentate was in a liberal mood, without any struggle whatever with himself. But Val had a struggle, the wild blood in his veins being unused to obedience and finding subjection hard. I am happy to say, however, that his powers were equal to the necessary sacrifice, and that he never made an exhibition of himself as he had been on the eve of doing on the day of his arrival. Time passed on, and Val grew and "mastered himself;" but sometimes did not master himself, and got into disgrace, and scrambled out again, and had no fair-weather voyage, but all a school-boy's troubles at their hardest. Hightowers had a very much easier time of it, for he was neither proud nor ambitious, but was just as happy at the foot of his division as anywhere else, quite as happy looking on at a game as playing, and took the floggings which overtook him periodically with the most heavenly calm; whereas the mere threat of one wrought Val to the point of desperation. Hightowers was better off than Val by right of his temperament and calmer blood. He took everything much more lightly, and used to discourse to his companion on the vanity of "making a fuss" with ponderous and precocious wisdom. "Why don't you take it easy, as I do?" said Hightowers; "what's the good of verses, for instance? A fellow never does verses after he leaves school. If you get complained of, it don't hurt you; and even a swishing, though it stings, it's only for a minute—I don't mind. There's a house match on to-day between Guerre's and Whiting's. Put that rubbish away and come along."

Val was on the point of going, when a recollection of what he had heard of his father's eminence in

the way of verse-making returned to his mind; whereupon he sat down again doggedly to grind the smooth English into rugged schoolboy Latin. He clenched his teeth at the thought of being inferior to his father—not from love—for how should he love the man who had not spent a kind word on him, or seen him, but once in his life?—but from a violent instinct of opposition which had sprung up in his soul, he could not tell why. He would not be beaten by his father; and this visionary jealousy overcame all Hightowers' philosophisings, and even the attractions of the match between Whiting's and Guerre's.

Thus the boy grew, not perhaps a very amiable boy, though with a side to his character which was as sweet and soft as the other was rugged; and with his grandfather's lesson well learned and bearing fruit. People who do right by a struggle are not so pleasant as those who do right because it comes natural to them—or even sometimes as those who do wrong in an easy and natural way without any effort; and when Val went home he would carry occasional traces of the conflict, and sometimes showed a chaotic condition of mind which disturbed the peace of his elders almost as much as it disturbed his own; and his career at school was of a mixed character, sometimes almost brilliant, sometimes very doubtful. What wild impulses would rise in him, longings for he knew not what, desires almost uncontrollable to rush away out of the routine in which his life was spent! Sometimes a fierce inclination to go to sea seized upon him; sometimes he would be suddenly tempted by the sight of the soldiers, of whom he saw so many, and for the moment the fancy of enlisting and going off unknown to India, China, or the end of the world, in search of adventures—a veritable

knight-errant—moved the boy. But only himself knew how sudden and fierce were these temptations. He did not confide them to any one. He could not tell where they came from, not being learned enough or clever enough to refer them to his mother's vagrant blood, which stirred and rose in spring-tides and periodical overflowings with the rising of his youth. But his practical schoolboy life had this excellent effect, that it withdrew him from everything visionary, giving him only practical difficulties and temptations to struggle against. He forgot at Eton all about the other

strange and jarring element in his existence which had perplexed him in his childhood. And, indeed, the boy had no leisure, even had he been disposed, to brood over his parentage, or ask himself why his father and mother were unlike those *paters* and *maters* of whom his companions talked. It was so; and what more could be said? He accepted the fact without further questioning, and thought no more about it. He had enough to do with his schoolboy occupations, and with that high art in which he was being trained by all the influences round him—the art of mastering himself.

## CHAPTER XV.

Val had grown to be sixteen, tall and strong, towering far above the old lord, and even above his father, who had made another visit to Eskside, and had seen his son, and regarded him with more approval than he did when Val was seven years old. The older he grew, however, the less the boy resembled Richard, whose features, settling into middle age, no longer even resembled themselves—a thing which few people took into consideration. Many persons in the county expressed their surprise, indeed, on seeing them together, how they could ever have supposed Valentine to be like his father—without in the least perceiving that the Honourable Richard Ross, who was Secretary of Legation in Florence, and had every chance of rising to the post of Ambassador the very next time that a wave of promotion came, was almost more unlike young Dick Ross, Lady Eskside's fair-haired boy. But Richard himself was very civil to his son, and inquired after his studies, and recounted his own Eton experiences, and volunteered advice about Oxford in a way which

gratified all the family. The interview between the father and son was perfectly polite and civil, though, on Val's side at least, there was little warm feeling; but both took from this meeting a sentiment of satisfaction, not to say something like pride in each other. Valentine on his side perceived his father's easy superiority in culture and knowledge of the world to the rural magnates who formed society at Eskside, with a sense of increased consequence which is always agreeable; while Richard looked upon the handsome bold boy, the soft oval of whose boyish face was yet unmarred by any manly growth on lip or cheek, with a curious mingled feeling of pride in this being who belonged to himself, and repugnance to the creature who recalled so strongly another image most unlike his own. Valentine possessed in a high degree that air of distinction which does not always accompany, as it ought, the highest birth. Beside him Lord Hightowers was as a ploughman, clumsy-footed, heavy-mannered, the very embodiment of the common in opposition to the re-



fined. How did this come about? "Val is very like the picture of your grandfather—the Raeburn, as you call it; though it would be more respectful to say the tenth lord," Lady Eskside said, with a slight faltering. "To be a Raeburn is some distinction, but the tenth lord was nobody in particular," said the *dilettante*, ignoring the subject of the likeness. For, indeed, as he developed, Valentine was the handsomest Ross that had been seen on Eskside for generations, though the dark curls pushed off his bold forehead, and his great liquid eyes full of light, and his form, which was all spring and grace and elasticity, represented another race altogether than the lords of Eskside.

This was his age and this his appearance in the summer after his sixteenth birthday, when there happened to Val an encounter which affected all his future life, little as he thought of any such result. It was the middle of June, the height of the "summer half," that period of perfect blessedness to young Eton, a delicious evening "after six," when all the nine hundred boys that form the community were out and about in full enjoyment of their most perfect moment of leisure. The sun was setting up the river in purple and crimson, building a broad pathway as of molten gold, a celestial bridge up to the summer heavens, over the gleaming water; the banks were gorgeous with summer flowers, thickets of the gay willow-herb, and yellow toad-flax, and great plummy feathers of the meadow-queen glowing in the evening light—the soft green of scattered willow-trees drooping above—and long beds of the tenderest blue forget-me-not dipping in and out of the stream. As if these did not supply colour enough, the whole breadth of the river was aglow with reflected beams from the sky, soft yellow, crimson,

orange—great rosy clouds deepening into purple, and a soft vague vault of blue above with specks of tinted cloud, like scattered roses. The river was alive with boats. A little farther up at Athens, the bathing-place, it was alive with something else—with shoals of boys bathing, plunging in and out, and peopling the shining stream with bobbing heads and white shoulders, as plentiful as fishes and as much at their ease in the element, but using their human privilege of laughter to turn the spot into a Babel of noisy sweetness—noise which the charmed summer air took all roughness out of, and made soft by magic. Val in his outrigger was lower down the stream, not much above the spot where the railway bridge does all that modern ugliness can to reduce nature to its own level. The boy was not thinking much about the beauty of the scene, yet he felt it, having a mind curiously open to all outdoor influences; and this it was which had arrested his course in mid stream, just where he could see the glorious mass of the castle rising from the green foliage of the slopes, and the clustered red roofs of the homely town. The sunset threw its fullest radiance upon this wonderful termination of the landscape, which seemed, from where Val contemplated it, to stand across the stream, the light whitening here and there a window, and a golden haze of warmth and mellow distance enveloping the grey walls, the pinnacles of St George's, the picturesque broken outline of the Curfew tower. The animated foreground was full of boats—dragon-fly outriggers like his own, poising their long outstretched wings over the water, "tubs" full of laughing boys—and through the midst of all, the glorious vision of the Eight, with a well-known stalwart figure, as big as the

boat in which he stood, steering the slim craft as it flew, and shouting stentorian correction and reproof to No. 4 and No. 7—for was not Henry in prospect, with all its chances of loss or triumph? Val withdrew toward the bank with a few strokes of his long oars, to get out of the way of that leviathan. As he stayed his boat again, with the sweetness of the evening, the light, the colour, the gay medley of sound floating in happy confusion into his mind—a gig, stumbling down stream in the hands of three or four laughing urchins, totally indifferent to the chances of a ducking, came suddenly foul of Val's boat, tossing his oar out of his hand, and upsetting him from his precarious vessel in a moment. Let not the gentle reader be dismayed; there was neither fright nor rarity in the accident, nor the slightest occasion for the blue-coated waterman, with the Eton lilies on his silver buttons, who stood in a punt at some distance with uplifted pole, relieved against the sunset sky, to hasten to the rescue. "Awfully sorry," said all the small boys, rather envying Val the delight of being swamped; they were fresh and wet themselves from bathing, and would have liked nothing better than to swamp too. As for Valentine, he swam to the bank, which was close by, pulling his slim bark after him. He had as little clothing upon his handsome person as decency permitted—a white jersey, thin as a spider's web, and white trousers turned up almost to the knee. So he was neither harmed nor alarmed, and might have walked back to the "rafts" and left his boat to be carried down by the stream without concerning himself about it, or seeking help to right it, had not his Fate commanded otherwise. But he had arrived at one of those moments in life, when Fate, potent and visible, except to the actors in the drama, does intervene.

It was, as I have said, the middle of June. Ascot races were lately over, and the roads, as careful housekeepers in lonely places knew but too well, were encumbered with "tramps," making their way from that great central event of their year, to the lesser incidents of country fairs and provincial races. Many of these wandering parties were about,—so many, that they had ceased to be much remarked by quiet wayfarers. And, indeed, the poor tramps were quiet enough;—weatherbeaten groups, women with children in their weary arms, men with fur caps and knotted handkerchiefs, and those specimens of the doggish race which have vagrant written in every hair of their shabby coats, as it is inscribed in the hard brown lines, drawn tight by exposure to the weather, of their masters' faces. Two of these tramps were seated on a log of wood, resting, just opposite the spot where Valentine's boat had swamped. These were a woman and a boy, more decent than the majority of their kind, though noway separated from it in appearance. The woman looked over forty, but was not so old. She was seated, with her hands crossed listlessly in her lap, holding a little bundle in a coloured handkerchief; her dress was a dark cotton gown and a shawl, with an old-fashioned bonnet which came quite round the face, enclosing it like a frame—a fashion which no longer finds favour among women. This dark circle round her face identified it, and called the passenger's attention; and a more remarkable face has seldom caught and arrested the careless eye. I saw her about this same time, seated on a bank in a leafy country road, with the light interlacing of shadow and sunshine on her; and as it was her aspect and looks which moved me to collect all these par-



ticulars, and trace out her history, and that of her children, I can speak still more distinctly of how she looked to me, than of her first appearance to Val. Complexion she had none. Her skin was burnt a kind of brick-dust colour, red-brown, and it was roughened by the exposure of years; her black hair was smoothed away on her forehead, leaving only a little rim visible between the brow and the bonnet. Her features were beautiful, but only struck the spectator when he had looked at her more than once, the roughness of her aspect and colouring seeming to throw a veil upon their beauty of form. But it was her eyes and expression which were most remarkable, and fascinated the wondering glance. She looked like Silence personified—her lips shut close, as if they could not open, and an air of strange abstraction from the immediate scene enveloping and removing her from its common occurrences. The circles round her eyes were wide and large, and out of those worn sockets looked two great wistful eyes, always looking, never seeing anything—eyes unfathomable, which were full of solemn expression, yet told you nothing, except that there was much to tell. In her way the beauty of the night had entered into her inarticulate soul; but I do not think she was aware of any of the details that made it up—and she had not even noticed the incident of the swamping when Valentine's light well-strung figure scrambled up the bank. "Here, you!" cried Val to the boy by her side, with the ready ease of one accustomed to command to one accustomed to obey—"lend us a hand, will you, to empty the boat?"

The boy, who had been seated by the woman's side, rose at the call with ready reply to the de-

mand upon him. He had the corresponding habit to Valentine's—the habit of hearing when he was called to, of doing what he was told to do. He had done everything to which a vagrant lad is bred—held horses, ran errands, executed a hundred odd jobs; and it did not occur to him to withhold the help by which sixpences were earned and bread gained, from any one who demanded it. "Here you are, sir," he answered, cheerily. He was about the same age as Valentine, but not so tall nor so finely made—a fair-haired sunny-faced lad, looking clean and ruddy, despite of dust and weariness, and the rough tramp costume, blue-spotted handkerchief, and nondescript jacket which he wore. He and his mother had been seated there together for some time past, not speaking to each other—for vagrants generally are a silent race. She did not stir even now, when he rose from her side. To have him called casually by whomsoever wanted help, and to see him obey, was habitual to her also. Val and the young tramp worked together in silence at the righting of the boat: they pulled it up on the bank, and turned it over, and set it afloat again. Then, however, Val changed his first intention. "I say," he began, half meditatively, "have you time to take her down to Goodman's? no, you mustn't get in, you can tow her down; and if you'll come to me to-morrow morning I'll pay you. I'm Ross, at Grinder's. Do you know Grinder's? well, anybody will tell you. You can come after ten to-morrow, and tell old Goodman it's Ross's beat."

"Yes, sir, I'll see to it," said the boy blithely, touching his cap. He looked up with his fair frank face to Val's, and the two lads "took a liking" to each other on the spot. Val had made a step or two down

the bank, then came back. "What are you?" he said; "do you live here? I never saw you on the river before."

"Mother and I are going to stop all night," said the lad; "we're last from Ascot; I aint got a trade, but just does odd jobs. No, I never was on the river before."

Upon which a sudden warmth of patronage and lordly benevolence came to Valentine's bosom. "If you stay here I'll give you what odd jobs I can. What's your name? I like the looks of you," said lordly Val.

"Dick Brown, sir; thank you, sir," said the lad, with grateful kindness. He had no pride to be wounded by this brusque address, but took it in perfectly good part, and was gratified by the good impression he had made. He had tied a piece of string, which he brought from his own pocket, to the sharp prow of the boat, and was preparing to tow it down stream. But he stopped as Val stopped, still dripping, his wet shirt fitting to his fine well-developed form like a glove. The other had none of Val's physical advantages of education, any more than the mental. He was as ignorant of how to hold himself as how to make Latin verses; and had he got into the outrigger, as he at first proposed, would have been by this time at the bottom of the river. He admired his handsome young patron with an innocent open-hearted pleasure in the sight of him, feeling him a hundred miles removed from and above himself.

"Very well," said Val; "you come to me to-morrow at Grinder's. If you stay we'll find you plenty to do."

Then he turned, bethinking himself of his wet clothes, which began to get chilly, and, with an amicable wave of his hand, stepped out along the road; but even then he paused

again, and turned back to call out, "Remember Ross, at Grinder's," and with another nod disappeared. The woman behind had not been attending to the colloquy. She roused up suddenly at these last words, and looked after the boy, with her eyes lighting up strangely. "What did he say?" she asked, in a half whisper, rising quickly and coming to her son's side; "what was that name he said?"

"His own name, mother," said the smiling lad. "I am to go to him at ten to-morrow. He's one of the college gentlemen. He says he likes the looks of me, and I shouldn't wonder if he'd help me to a job."

"What was his name?" repeated the woman, grasping her son's arm impatiently. He took it with perfect calm, being accustomed to her moods.

"Come along, mother, I've to take the boat down to the raft; Ross, at Grinder's. I wonder where's Grinder's. He's Ross, I suppose."

The woman stood with her hand on his arm, looking after the other figure which withdrew into the distance through the soft air, still tinted with all the rosy lights of sunset. The young athlete, all dripping in his scanty clothing, was joined by an admiring train as he went on; he was popular and well known, and his loyal followers worshipped him as much in this momentary eclipse as if he had done something famous. The tramp woman was roused out of all the abstraction with which she had sat, oblivious of Valentine's closer presence, gazing vaguely at the sky and the river. Her eyes followed him with a hungry eagerness, devouring the space between; a slight nervous trembling ran through her frame.

"I wish I had seen him nigh at hand," she said, with a sigh; "it's my luck, always my luck."



"Come along and you'll see him still if you want to," said the lad; "I know what them swells do. They go down to the rafts and takes off their wet things, and puts on their coats and chimney-pots. He's a good un to look at, I can tell you; but you never see nothing that's under your nose, mother. You get curious-like when anything's past."

"Don't stand talking," said the woman, with a tremulous impatience, "but come on."

Dick obeyed promptly; but it is not so easy to walk quickly, towing a troublesome outrigger with its projecting rowlocks, when there is no one in it to guide its course along the inequalities of the bank. The woman bore this delay with nervous self-restraint as long as she could, then telling him she would wait for him, pursued her way rapidly alone to the rafts, which were crowded by boys arriving and departing in every possible stage of undress. She waited wistfully at the gate, not venturing to enter the railed-off enclosure, which was sacred to the boats and "the gentlemen;" and when Val issued forth in his "change" coat, which was a brilliant garment in coloured strips, she did not recognise him. She stood there in tremulous and passionate agitation—suppressed, it is true, but intense—gazing wistfully at the crowds of moving figures, all bearing that resemblance to each other which boys undergoing the same training and wearing the same dress so often do. She could not identify any one, and she was growing sick and faint with weariness, and with the beating of her heart.

"Here I am, mother; did you see him?" said Dick, appearing at last, tired but pleased, with his awkward charge.

"How was I to know him?" she asked, sharply; "I did not see his

face. As to who he is, Dick, it's a name I once knew. I wish I had seen him; but it's my luck, always my luck." "I'll ask all about him, mother," said the cheery boy; but while he was gone to deposit the boat, some other members of their wandering class joined the woman, and distracted, or did their best to distract, her attention. With them she made a long round by the bridge to the Windsor side—(there was a ferry, but pennies are pennies, and were not to be lightly spent on personal ease)—and then made her way to a lodging she knew in the vagrant quarter—the Rag Fair of the little royal borough. Whatever might be the thoughts that were passing in her mind, or whatever the anxieties within her hidden heart, she had to give her attention to the practical side of her rough life, and stopped on her way to buy some scraps of meat and some bread for her own and her son's meal. There was a common fire in the lower room of the lodging-house, at which the tramp-lodgers were allowed to cook their supper. This woman did so in her turn, like the rest; and to Dick the scraps which his mother had cooked, as well as she knew how, made a luxurious meal, taken on a corner of the rough table, with all the sounds and all the smells of Coffin Lane coming in at the open door. There was a Babel of sounds going on within in addition, each group talking according to its pleasure, and the outdoor shouting, jesting, quarrelling, coming in as chorus. Dick had not found out very much about his young patron. He told his mother that he had summut to do with a lord, but was not sure what. "But why can't we stay here a bit?" said Dick. "There aint nothing going on in the country but poor things, where we don't pick up enough to keep body and soul together; you'll see

I'll make something handsome on the river, with all the odd jobs there is ; and if this here young gentleman is as good as his word——"

"Did he look as if he would be as good as his word?"

"Lord bless us, how can I tell?" said Dick. "I don't read faces, nor fortunes neither, like you. He said he liked the looks of me ; and so did I," the lad added, with a laugh. "I hope it'll do him a deal of good. I like the looks of him too."

And Dick went to bed in the room which he shared (under Government regulation and with great regard to the cubic feet of air—such air as is to be had in Coffin Lane) with two other rough fellows not so guiltless in their vagrancy as himself—with a cheery heart, thinking that here, perhaps, he had found foundation enough to build a life upon—a beginning to his career, if he had known such an imposing word. He was a good boy, though his previous existence had been spent among the roughest elements of society. He knelt down boldly at his bedside, and said the short half-childish prayer which he had been taught as a child, without caring in the least for his companions' jeers. Perhaps even it was more a charm against evil than a prayer ; but, such as it was, the boy held by it bravely. He was exhilarated somehow, and full of hope, he could not have told why. Something good seemed about to happen to him. I do not know what

he expected Valentine to do for him, or if he expected anything definite ; but he was somehow inspired and elated, he could not tell why.

His mother, for her part, sat down upon her bed and pondered, her abstract eyes fixing upon the bare whitewashed walls as solemn a gaze as that which she had fixed on the distant glow of the sunset across the river. They were not eyes which could see anything near at hand, but were always far off, watching something visionary, more true than the reality before her. She, too, had companions in her room, where there was nothing beyond the supply of bare necessities—a bed to sleep on, nothing more. She had not Dick's happy temperament, but she was as indifferent as he was to the base surroundings of that poor and low level of life to which they were accustomed ; but somehow, in her mind too, various new thoughts, or rather old thoughts, which were new by reason of long disuse, were surging up whether she would or not. Perhaps it was the sound of the name which she had not heard for years. Ross. It was not a very uncommon name ; but yet, when this poor creature began to think who the boy whom she had seen might be—and to wonder with quick-beating pulses whether it was so—these thoughts were enough to fill her heart with such wild throbs and bursts of feeling as had not stirred it for many years.



## HERCULES.

No grander form meets us as we wander through the tangled wilderness of Hellenic legend than that of the strong yet suffering, the subduing yet struggling Hercules, the persecuted son of Zeus, the vanquisher of Hades. No matter how his story originated—whether in an exaggerated tradition of the exploits of some mighty man of old, or (according to modern theories) in the misunderstood language in which the young Aryan race described the sun's twelve labours through the twelve signs of the zodiac, and the red light which at his setting makes the sky to blaze like the flames of a hero's funeral pile. The tale, however it first arose, has been told, by Homer briefly, by the later Hellenic poets at length; gathering significance as it fell on the ear of one toiling and sorrowful generation after another with a spiritual meaning often wanting to the graceful stories of ancient song. As men found this world in various ways too hard for them, they loved to hear of the great champion who had wandered through and beyond Hellas, slaying monsters and vanquishing tyrants,—just as our own oppressed forefathers loved the minstrel's tale of knight-errant and dragon-killer; men in more thoughtful mood, conscious of alien and discordant elements in their own breasts, moaning over "the better approved, the worse pursued" by themselves, lent an eager ear to the story of the divine and human in Hercules sundered by the purifying fires on Mount Ceta; men trembling as they thought of death, heard with awe and delight that he had once been forced to resign a prey—that the soul of the dead Alcestis had been won back by the strong

arm of Hercules from his grasp. The memory of that tremendous wrestling-match, so suggestive of mysterious reflections, has been recently revived by one of the most beautiful of modern pictures, the *Alcestis* of Mr Leighton. The play of Euripides which supplied the theme for that picture has been doubtless of late perused by many of our readers (stripped, alas! of its beautiful lyrics), as done into English (and on the whole well done) by Mr Browning in his "*Balaustion's Adventure*." If they have taken, as careless people will do sometimes, the translator's interpolated remarks for a portion of the text, they will have supposed the Hercules of the "*Alcestis*" to be a nobler image than they will find him, when they come to turn the pages of the Greek original in search of the

"Human and divine  
In the weary happy face,"

which, in Leighton's picture, is turned away from them so persistently. The young hero, summoned in the fine apologue of Prodicus to choose between virtue and vice—the brave man whom the malice of a mighty goddess may torment but cannot crush—is sunk in this particular play of Euripides almost to the level of the ordinary giant of fiction, by a semi-burlesque and thoroughly commonplace treatment, and depicted to us as strong indeed, and full of a certain careless good-humour inspired by strength, but as little more. It is otherwise in another though less famous play of Euripides, the "*Frenzied Hercules*;" it is far otherwise in the "*Trachinæ*" of Sophocles, even as we may conjecture that it was very far otherwise in the lost "*Prometheus Delivered*" of Æschylus. In this last

play Hercules appeared in his noblest character, as the setter free of the suffering friend of the human race; in the two others to which we have referred he has himself been rendered wretched, but stands forth majestic still beneath his load of undeserved misery. We therefore would propose to our readers to turn aside from the Hercules of the "Alcestis" as well known but unsatisfactory, and to look at him instead as depicted under other circumstances by the same, and by a more masterly hand. In the first play in which they made acquaintance with him, as in the picture, they had little thought to spare for him; all their interest was centred on the self-devoted queen lying dead, yet lovely—

"Beneath the sun  
She longed to look her last upon, beside  
The sea,"

which waits smiling and lustrous to be the first thing to greet those fair eyes when they unclose. But her champion, that manly impersonation of youthful vigour, who wrestled so bravely for her with that ghostly shape, shall we not seek at last to look on *his* features? A more fearful foe awaits him than even

"The poisonous impalpability  
That simulates a form beneath the flow  
Of those grey garments,"

which shroud more than they reveal of Death in Mr Leighton's picture: he has yet to stand face to face again with the self-same antagonist; but when he does so, it will be to call on him as a friend, no longer to strive with him as a foe. Let us follow his fortunes as they were conceived by Euripides and by Sophocles; each carrying out in his own way

the ancient sentiment, that unexampled glory must be compensated sooner or later by an unexampled reverse; each opening the deepest fount of tragic feeling by a representation of a loving hand causing against its will the death of its best beloved. In our extracts from Sophocles we shall make use of a very able version, Mr Campbell's "Deianeira"\* (so he has preferred to call the "Trachiniæ"), as the most recent; in those from Euripides we may hope that an original translation may at least possess the charm of novelty; and if we assign a larger space (except in the concluding portion of the two tragedies) to the "Frenzied" than to the "Dying Hercules," the cause must be sought in the greater number of good translations extant of the latter than of the former, and in the more detailed (though still short) description given of the "Trachiniæ" in the now world-famous series of "Ancient Classics for English Readers," than that for which Mr Donne has been able to find room (in his excellent account of Euripides) of the "Frenzied Hercules."

This last-named play evidently derives its origin from a Theban tradition (perhaps disbelieved in other parts of Greece, and to which, for instance, Sophocles makes no reference) of the death of those sons of Hercules born to him by Megara, the daughter of Creon, whose graves, as Pindar testifies in his fourth Isthmian Ode, were still visible in his time outside the Electrid gate at Thebes, and were still honoured by the city with a yearly sacrifice.† In its theme, a heaven-sent madness, it most nearly resembles the "Ajax" of Sophocles, which (though

\* Three Plays of Sophocles, translated by Professor Campbell. W. Blackwood & Sons.

† The play called the "Heracleidæ," or "Children of Hercules," depicts the fortunes of those born to him by Deianeira; and though less interesting than the "Frenzied Hercules" or the "Alcestis," is yet made beautiful by the generous self-sacrifice of the young Macaria. It was selected by De Quincey for a careful and detailed description, as a typical example of the ordinary Greek play.



it depicts a greater calamity) it is far from equalling in sustained pathos. Like the "Ajax," it presents the madness of its hero to us as the infliction of an angry god, which is to be chiefly observed by us in its results; not so much contemplated, while it endures, as an interesting though painful psychological study, like the madness of an Ophelia or a Lear. But, unlike the "Ajax," the refuge which stands open to the wounded pride of the Sophoclean hero is denied to Hercules in his sorer woe. The well-known tradition of his death forbade Euripides to end his life at Thebes, and forced him to bid his hero live on to bear the crushing load of his guilt—involuntary indeed, but, to the Greek's untaught mind, guilt still: to live on after a terrible reverse of fortune, second only in horror, among all the terrible reverses of the Hellenic drama, to the fate of *Œdipus*. The play, considered by itself, lacks poetic justice, since in it a worse visitation than that of the Furies on *Orestes* descends unprovoked to cause, not to avenge, the shedding of kindred blood. Nay, it is visibly atheistic in its tendency, since the fatherhood of Zeus only arouses the malignity of *Hera* against his son, and never moves him to interfere to save him from its fearful effects. "Rather no gods than such," is the scarcely veiled moral of the whole drama. We must call in *Homer* and *Pindar* to redress the balance, as the original audience doubtless did, and view in these terrible evils the permitted means to fit the hero for the arduous ascent to *Olympus*, ere we can calmly behold his woe beyond the measure of human woe, as delineated by *Euripides*.

The "Frenzied Hercules" opens in a manner peculiarly calculated to engage the spectator's attention. The scene is an open space in seven-

gated Thebes. In the background is the house of *Hercules*—absent, as we speedily learn, on the most perilous of all his numerous expeditions. *Eurystheus* had commanded him to go down to *Hades*, and thence to drag the triple-headed *Cerberus* to light. He went down by the dark opening of *Tænarus*, and has not reappeared. His friends are mourning him as dead, his enemies are rejoicing. In the centre of the stage stands the altar raised by *Hercules*, after his triumph over the *Minyæ*, to Zeus the Preserver. And round this altar are grouped five helpless suppliants, who have fled there from the house which has ceased to afford them protection;—the aged father, the wife, and the three young sons of *Hercules*. They are seeking there a shelter from the fury of *Lycos*, the new tyrant of Thebes, who, during the long absence of *Hercules*, has slain his wife's father, *Creon*, the former king, and now seeks to complete his victory and secure his own undisturbed reign by killing the unhappy *Megara* and her children. Her discourse with her father-in-law, *Amphitryon*, reveals to us their hopeless condition. "Calamity, the surest touchstone of friendship," is a trial which few abide, and which has left them friendless indeed; for, of those whom they counted friends before, some dare not, others will not, help them. Of the two, the old man is the more hopeful; the vicissitudes which terrify the fortunate are the hope of the miserable, and he will not abandon all thought of his son's return,—to delay the evil may cure it. But *Megara* despairs of help; and though she yet fondly guards her children "as the mother bird her young," yet she sadly feels that she is only protracting their sufferings. Round this hapless group stand ranged

the old men of Thebes, who form the Chorus—powerless to aid, but full of pity for their distress. They look kindly on the children, heirs to their father's honours and misfortunes, whose young eyes remind them of those bright-flashing glances from which so many a foe shrank back; but which (as they fear) will appal enemy and encourage friend no more. These boys, now doomed to death, should have grown up the future defence of Hellas; but what can hoary heads and weak, tottering, dream-like forms do for their preservation? Already Lycos is seen approaching. He asks Amphitryon and Megara what vain hope keeps back their surrender? Is he himself likely to relent, and allow them to bring up avengers of the slain Creon in his grandchildren? Or dare they yet hope that Hades will restore to them their defender? Yea, even were he here, do his conquests over lion and hydra, over mere beasts, stamp him as able to subdue a man like himself? Amphitryon, not unwillingly, delays his answer to the main question by defending the absent Hercules from these senseless aspersions; and takes occasion to upbraid Thebes and all Hellas with the ingratitude which has left their deliverer's children with no better protection than an old man's feeble arm. The tyrant grows weary of argument, and abruptly closes the debate by commanding his men to cut wood, heap fagots round the altar, and burn the suppliants where they stand. Then Megara sees further resistance to be useless, dissuades the Chorus from provoking Lycos to an unequal combat, as in their just rage at his cruelty they are at first disposed to do, and, with Amphitryon, capitulates on these two conditions: first, that the mother and grandsire may have the privilege of dying before the children; next, that Me-

gara may enter her house once more, and fetch thence raiment wherewith to array her little ones for the tomb. After this is settled, the hapless pair retire with the children—Amphitryon chiding Zeus, in the bitterness of his spirit, as either unwilling or unable to protect his friends, and marvelling how so great a deity can let himself be outdone in devotion to them by a mortal. Meantime the tyrant has departed to give orders for the approaching execution, and the Chorus are left alone on the vacant stage. They there dispose themselves to sing a grand funeral ode in praise of the great deeds of the vanished Hercules.

It is too long to give entire; nor is the enumeration of the hero's twelve labours in succession so interesting to us as it doubtless was to the Hellenic audience. We shall be content, therefore, with its commencement and pathetic conclusion; trusting to the erudition of our readers to supply vanquished Amazon, and slain Hydra, in their proper intermediate places.

*1st Strophe.*

After song of gladness  
Phœbus raises now the wail,  
Tuning his sweet-voiced lyre to sadness;  
Nor yet my hymn shall fail  
In praise of him who now earth's gloom  
must tread,  
Those paths that track the dead  
(Amphitryon's or Jove's son),  
Crowning that now low head  
With wreath of praise for mighty labours  
done:  
Of generous toils the memory  
Nobly decorates a grave.  
First of songs be sung  
How his arm set free  
Zeus' grove from lion's tread;  
How he its fierce jaws gave  
For helmet to his golden head, its hide  
around him flung.

*1st Antistrophe.*

Next his sharp shafts wounded  
Mountain Centaurs' savage race;  
While with shrill twang his bow-string  
sounded  
Each arrow found its place.



*3d Antistrophe.*

And many another course he gloriously  
 Performed : then, last of all,  
 He sailed to tearful Hades, there to end  
 His labours ; nor returned again.  
 His roof protects no friend.  
 The boat of Charon past recall  
 Summons thy children to the darksome  
 sea ;  
 A godless, wrongful voyage, while wist-  
 fully  
 Thy house looks for thy sheltering hand  
 in vain.  
 Ah ! had I youthful strength to  
 stand  
 And brandish spear in fight,  
 I with my fellow-Theban band  
 Would for those children show  
 our might :  
 But happy youth from me has winged  
 her flight.

(MEGARA and AMPHITRYON enter  
 with the children.)

Yea, now I see them their grave-clothes  
 wearing,  
 Those sons of Hercules, once the great ;  
 Sadly the mother her victims bearing,  
 Bound for slaughter in hapless state,  
 With his old father at her side.  
 I, unhappy ! how can I restrain,  
 Though from fountains that age should  
 have dried,  
 Tears as I view their pain ?

MEGARA.

Who is the priest to slay these ill-starred  
 victims,  
 To be the murderer of my wretched life ?  
 These offerings are prepared to lead to  
 Hades.  
 My sons, they lead us not well-matched  
 to die,  
 The old and young, mother and sons to-  
 gether.  
 Oh my most wretched fate ! and yours,  
 my children,  
 Whom now I look on for the last—last  
 time !  
 I bare, I nurtured you but for our foes,  
 To be their mockery, cruel joy, and prey.  
 Alas ! how much those hopes have  
 cheated me  
 Which once I gathered from your father's  
 words !

You, his three sons, o'er kingdoms three  
 exalted,  
 Your sire, high things devising in his  
 valour ;  
 While I in thought chose you the noblest  
 brides,  
 Wedding you to the best of Athens' maids,  
 Of Sparta, and of Thebes ; that such fair  
 ties

Might make your life-voyage ever pros-  
 perous.  
 These hopes are fled. And changed Fate  
 in their room  
 Leads you another bride, a bloody death ;  
 Gives me for nuptial laver tears, (ah !  
 anguish !)  
 Bidding your grandsire o'er the feast  
 preside,  
 And bind you (bitter bond !) to Hades'  
 daughter.  
 Alas ! which first of you to this sad heart  
 Shall I press close ? Which last ? Which  
 fondly kiss ?  
 Whose hand clasp tight ? Oh that, like  
 yellow bee,  
 I could collect from each of you laments,  
 Gathered to pour in one vast ceaseless  
 tear !  
 Oh Hercules ! best-loved ! if, down in  
 Hades,  
 The dead can hear our voice, to thee I  
 speak :  
 Thy sire, thy sons are dying ; I too perish,  
 Whom mortals counted blest because of  
 thee.  
 Help, come ! if but a wraith, yet let me  
 see thee.

The tender anguish of this pa-  
 thetic appeal seems mighty, with a  
 force prevailing above the might of  
 the Orphic lyre amid the regions  
 of the dead. The aged Amphitry-  
 on (after one more useless invoca-  
 tion of Zeus) is giving his old com-  
 rades a last despairing farewell,  
 and, with bitter reflections on the  
 instability of human hopes, has  
 just told them to look their last  
 on their departing friend, when  
 a cry from Megara makes him  
 turn and behold his son. Her-  
 cules himself stands before them,  
 to all appearance a shade—like Pro-  
 tesilaus, unable to resist the call of  
 conjugal affection, answering the  
 cry of Megara as he of Laodameia  
 —but in truth a living man, re-  
 turned unharmed from his perilous  
 journey to the under-world. All are  
 alike amazed,—the wife and father  
 at this unhoped-for resurrection, the  
 husband at the peril in which he  
 finds those whom he had left safely  
 sheltered under the protection of  
 Megara's kingly sire. Time urges ;  
 there is little space for tender greet-

ings and outpourings of affection : hasty answers to hasty questions put Hercules in possession of what his wife has already suffered in the deaths of her father and her brethren, and of the worse ill from which he has been sent back only just in time to save her. Nor can he indulge in long narration of his own last and greatest exploit. He tells them in brief words of Cerberus dragged to the unwonted light of day ; of Theseus delivered from his captivity in the realms below, and restored by his hand to Athens ; and then addresses himself to the task of taking vengeance on the tyrant Lycos. By Amphitryon's counsel he lays aside the thought of "filling Ismenus with corpses," and goes into his own house to await the king's coming to fetch his victims. The tenderness with which he proclaims his readiness to die, if needful, for his sons ; the eagerness with which he bids them fling away grave-clothes and fillets ; the indignation with which he asks what is the good of having fought lion and hydra if he cannot even defend his own children ; the joy with which he leads them within his house-doors to "compensate their sorrowful exit by a glad entrance,"—are so many steps up the height from whose summit of happiness the hero is shortly to be flung with a most ruinous fall. So also the delight of Megara (too deep for words, as she clings to her husband's raiment with a wild and tremulous joy which scarcely believes its own existence, while he looks down to cheer her with fond protecting love) is as it were a flash of summer lightning between two storms, of which far the worst is to come.

But for the moment all is pleasure, both within and without the house. Within, the hero fondles his little ones and reassures his wife ; outside, the Chorus sing the

praises of youth. Presently Lycos appears, and bids Amphitryon call forth those appointed to die. No tidings have reached him of the return of Hercules ; and when the old man feigns reluctance to take an active part in his kindred's death, Lycos himself enters the house without hesitation to summon his victims forth. Amphitryon calls on the Chorus to exult at seeing the tyrant in the toils, and follows to enjoy the sight of his death ; while the slow and solemn chant of the Chorus rejoices in this sure, if late, display of the divine justice ; and, so soon as the deed of vengeance is accomplished, hastens with quickened march to congratulate the victor.

#### CHORUS.

Exchange of ills : this king, before so great,  
Turns his course back, to Hades sinking down.  
Oh, Justice stern ! oh, god-sent ebb of fate !  
The time has come for judgment ; thou must die,  
Who didst o'er nobler heads exulting stand.  
Thy wicked joy breeds tears which none shall dry.  
Thou, cruel king ! to an unthought-of hand  
Must yield thy life and crown.  
Ye elders, let us look within, and see  
If to our wish the deed is being done.

Lycos (*within*).

Ah me ! alas ! ah me !

#### CHORUS.

The strain I longed for has at last begun  
Within the house : death cannot now be far,—  
For slaughter's prologue roars the king with groans.

Lycos (*within*).

Oh land of Cadmus ! I am slain by guile.

#### CHORUS.

By guile thou slewest : let vengeful Justice wreak  
Her will : death only death atones.  
What mortal now dares tax the gods, and mar



Their greatness, and by senseless speech  
defile,  
As though the gods were weak ?  
Elders ! that impious man is now no  
more.  
The house is quiet ; then with dances  
seek  
To greet our friends, their sorrows  
o'er.

*1st Strophe.*

Let dance and cheerful feast prevail to  
holy Theba's utmost bound ;  
When tears are newly dried,  
When turned ill-fortune's tide,  
New strains resound.  
Gone is the stern new king ;—  
Who ruled before rules now,  
Leaving dim Acheron's stream and  
shades below.

A hope that none saw bud is blossoming.

*1st Antistrophe.*

The gods, the gods watch heedfully the  
wrongful doer and the pure ;  
But gold and good success  
Man's wiser thoughts suppress,  
Till might secure  
Falls headlong. Times of old  
No eye looks back to scan ;  
Lawless abides the trespass-loving  
man,  
Till wealth's bright car down misery's  
rock has rolled.

*2d Strophe.*

Let Ismenus wear a crown.  
Bright streets of this seven-gated  
City, lead the choral dance.  
Dirce, queen of limpid waters,  
Come with old Asopus' daughters ;  
Leave your parent fount, advance  
Nymphs, and sing with joy elated  
Hercules and his renown,  
How he fought and won the day.  
Wooded crags where Pythius dwells,  
Heliconian Muses' cells,  
Sing, with loud and cheerful lay,  
My walled city nobly planned,  
Where sprang up the earth-sown race  
Brazen shields to clash, and hand  
Unto children's sons the land,  
Unto Thebes a light and grace.

*2d Antistrophe.*

Oh, fair bride to husbands twain,  
Zeus, and wedded to a mortal !  
Nymph of Perseus' race renowned,  
Now belief at last I gather ;  
Zeus has proved himself the father.  
Now our hopeless hope is found  
Issuing from the grave's dark portal.  
Time has proved aspersion vain,  
Hercules, upon thy might  
That from Pluto's house has burst.

Thou of kings art best and first,—  
Other claims to thine are light.  
Thou thy lofty birth shalt show  
Plainer yet where swords shall thrust,  
Strong men at thy feet fall low ;—  
If the gods still favour owe  
To that arm whose cause is just.  
(IRIS appears above, leading MADNESS.)

Cease, cease to sing !  
Ye elders ! do our fears return once  
more ?

What ghastly form floats down the  
housetop o'er ?

Fly ! hastening  
With aged limbs from this dread sight  
away !

Apollo ! king !  
In terror dread be thou my help and  
stay !

Seldom has even the Greek tragic  
Muse, with all her delight in sudden  
and terrible changes of fortune,  
imagined a change more terrible or  
more sudden than that heralded by  
these exclamations of the startled  
Chorus. The exuberant joy which  
for a season made these old men  
young, which overflowed from their  
lips in such a torrent of gratulation  
and glad anticipation, is checked, is  
frozen in a single instant, by the  
advent of the direst evil which  
besets mortality, of the power of  
Madness, personified by the poet as  
Lyssa the avenging deity. Iris,  
Hera's messenger, clad this time in  
no hopeful rainbow hues, leads her  
down to accomplish the malignant  
will of her cruel mistress on Her-  
cules. It could not take full  
effect (so she says) until his labours  
were accomplished ; they are fin-  
ished now, and Hera means to  
stain his victorious hands with  
kindred blood. "Now go, aided  
by thy relentless heart" (so she  
addresses "black Night's unwedded  
daughter"), "stir the man till in his  
madness he send with his own hand  
his crown of beautiful children  
across Acheron, and so learn how  
great is Hera's wrath against him."  
Scarcely anywhere in Hellenic tra-  
gedy does a goddess show herself so  
shamefully bad as here, except in the

"Hippolytus" of the same author ; nowhere so completely as in these two cases does the Greek drama exemplify the truth of the inspired declaration of a later day, that "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils." Even *Madness* remonstrates, and desires to be excused from attacking a man renowned among the gods as well as men for his mighty and beneficent deeds : it is only when Iris reiterates Hera's command, that, bidding the sun bear witness that she goes against her will, the dread deity goes forth to "perturb the breast of Hercules with a worse tumult than thunder-bolt or earthquake." Iris returns to Olympus ; *Madness* departs to perform her errand unseen ; the terrified Chorus remain behind. Their minds, like those of the audience, are overpowered by the coming inevitable calamity. They have rejoiced with the wife and children, safe at last in port after a long tempest ; are they now to see them wrecked there ? They have heard how kindly Hercules soothed their fluttering hearts—they have listened to his declaration that in this at least all men, the worst and best, are alike, that they love their own children ; must they behold that strong protecting hand reddened from the veins of the helpless things that now cling to it ? In no ordered song, like those which preceded it—in broken snatches of melody, disarranged by their anguish—the Chorus shriek out as they best can their sense of the unexampled horror which is being transacted in that house, a few minutes before so smiling.

## CHORUS.

Raise the wail, thou city !  
Groan, for Zeus' son, thy flower, is shorn.  
Hellas ! weep, of thy friend forlorn !  
In the joyless dance see his form and  
pity,  
See him by *Madness* torn.  
She has come on her car of might ;

That Gorgon whom snakes hundred-headed hiss round,  
Darting her deadly sting,  
Reason bewildering,  
Groans on her track abound,—

*Madness*, the glittering-eyed daughter of Night !

Quickly shall vanish our joy,  
Quickly the father his children destroy.

Alas the day, Zeus ! which shall see thy son left

Childless and wretched, through vengeful blow

By cruel *Madness* of reason bereft !

Roofs sound our woe !

The dance begins ; but drums are mute,  
No joyous hand the thyrsus waves.

Groan, house, for blood, not such as laves

The feet of Bacchanal from clustered fruit !

Fly, children, fly ! for a song I hear,  
A song that is singing of danger near.

Your father will chase you in fierce pursuit.

A moment, a moment still,

Then *Madness* takes of the house her will.

Woe, woe, for the boundless ill !

Ah ! for the aged sire I groan,

And how for her who bore in vain,

And nourished up that infant train !

Behold ! behold, how the house doth moan !

'Neath the whirlwind's shock, unto falling nigh !

What dost thou, Zeus' child ? This house shakes beneath

A trouble as dread as the misery

Wrought by Pallas on Titan,—'tis sent by thy breath.

MESSENGER (*enters*).

Oh, heads by age made hoar !

CHORUS.

What means, what means that cry ?

MESSENGER.

Accursed deeds pollute the hall.

CHORUS.

I need no other augury.

MESSENGER.

The children's life is o'er.

Groan now, if ever ; see them fall

By hostile hand—that hand their sire's.

Where find a woe so great as now our anguish fires ?

The Chorus ask for particulars of the grievous calamity, and, according to the practice of the Greek



stage, the Messenger begins a long narration of horrors, too frightful to be exhibited before the audience. He depicts Hercules, while peacefully standing before his domestic altar with his family, as suddenly seized by a paroxysm of madness, and impelled to slay Eurystheus, the author of his troubles. He fancies himself driving in a chariot to Mycenæ, then arrived there and preparing to execute his vengeance. He draws his bow, shoots his unerring shafts against his enemy's sons as he thinks, and they pierce his own children, as (too late aware of their peril) they crouch behind pillar or altar. The last is slain in the arms of his unhappy mother, and the fatal arrow ends her life also. Nay, Hercules would have killed his own father in his frenzy, had not Pallas interposed, and made him sink down in a lethargic sleep at the foot of a pillar, to which the attendants and his trembling parent hasten to bind him. "There," says the messenger, "the miserable man is still sleeping his unhappy sleep, after having murdered wife and children." And scarcely have the Chorus had time to pronounce this woe to be terrible and unexampled among all horrors of former times, when the folding doors of the house fly open, and disclose to their sight the appalling spectacle of which they have heard. To the right and left of the stage lie the two slain boys; a little further off lies Megara with her bleeding little one in her arms; and in the centre Hercules sleeps his uneasy sleep at the foot of the pillar, his bow and arrows scattered at his feet, while his old father stands lamenting over him. With a consideration rare on the Greek stage, Amphytrion bids the Chorus keep silence lest they rob his son of a momentary oblivion of his sorrows. They answer that they cannot but

groan and weep over the slaughtered children, and the head, crowned before so gloriously, now brought so low. Their hearts are too full to heed Amphytrion's reiterated charge. They recommence with a question :

*Chorus.* Sleeps he ?

*Amphytrion.* Such wretched sleep as he may know

Who wife and children dear

Slew with his sounding bow.

*Cho.* Lament with groan and tear—

*Amph.* I do—

*Cho.* The children's ruin.

*Amph.* Woe is me !

*Cho.* Thy son's.

*Amph.* Alas !

*Cho.* Old man !

*Amph.* Stand silently ;

He turns ; he soon will wake ; I haste to hide

Within the house.

*Cho.* Take courage, night

Yet presses on his eyelids.

*Amph.* In this tide

Of woes, I cling not to the light ;

But if in me his sire he slay,

He will crowd ill on ill,

Made by that kindred blood the Furies' prey.

*Cho.* Thou shouldst have died on that great day

When for thy wife thou didst revenge fulfil,

For brother's blood the Taphian city wasting,

That town which girt the wave.

*Amph.* Fly, elders, fly! from this doomed mansion hasting ;

Escape that frenzied head's awakening, lest

Slaughter on slaughter pressed,

Through Cadmus' streets he rave.

*Cho.* Zeus, why thus, of thy son relentless foe,

Hast thou immersed him in this sea of woe ?

*Hercules (awakening).* I breathe ; I see the things I ought to see—

The sky, the earth, the arrows of the sun.

Yet had I fallen as if into a whirlpool,

A terrible bewildering of the mind ;

Even now my breath comes hot and fitful from it.

Why, like some ship by cables, am I fastened

With bands about my stalwart breast and arms

To this half-broken column ? sitting here

With corpses all around me, while my bow

And winged shafts are strewn upon the ground ;

That bow of old the warder of my side,  
Keeping me safe, kept ever safe by me !  
Can I once more have gone down into  
Hades,

Running Eurystheus' double course again ?  
Nay, for I see no rock of Sisyphus,  
No Pluto, nor Demeter's sceptred daughter.

I am amazed : what place has thus perplexed me ?

Which of my friends stands far, or near at hand,

Able to cure my ignorance ? for nought  
Of things accustomed can I clearly know.

*Amph.* Elders, shall I approach my sore misfortune ?

*Cho.* Yea ; I with thee, thy trouble not deserting.

*Her.* Father ! why dost thou weep and shroud thine eyes,  
Standing aloof from thy beloved son ?

*Amph.* Oh child ! for such thou art e'en faring worst. . . .

*Her.* Fare I then somehow sadly ; whence these tears ?

*Amph.* So ill, that thus bested a god would groan.

*Her.* High sound thy words ; my fate they speak not yet.

*Amph.* Nay, for thou seest it if thy wit be sound.

*Her.* Speak, is there some new charge against my life ?

*Amph.* Lo ! here behold the bodies of thy children.

*Her.* Most wretched that I am ! what do I see ?

*Amph.* A war unwarlike thou hast warred, my son,  
Against thy children.

*Her.* War ! what sayest thou ?  
Who slew these ?

*Amph.* Thou, thy bow, the prompting god.

*Her.* What ? what did I ? oh, woe-announcing father !

*Amph.* Thou didst it in thy madness, ask no more.

*Her.* Of my own wife too am I murderer ?

*Amph.* One hand wrought all these deeds, that hand was thine.

Here, as one can scarcely help thinking, the tragedy should have ended. The imagination refuses to paint the hero's anguish at this most terrible of all discoveries ; and the best attempt to do so in words must needs show pale and poor. Nevertheless, Euripides essays it ;

nay more, like Goethe,\* he is not content without undertaking to reconcile his hero with life. The Ajax of Sophocles (as we remarked before) hastens to die as soon as he finds that he has at once missed his purposed revenge, and rendered himself the laughing-stock of the Greeks ; nor can the entreaties of wife and child detain him. But Euripides makes his Hercules consent to renounce his desperate purpose of avenging his children's blood upon himself with sword or fire, and agree at last to live, in spite of the loved shades which beckon to him to follow them by that same dark road along which he first sent them. The mediator between the sufferer and the life which he has begun to hate is well chosen. It is Theseus, rescued shortly before (as we have seen) from Hades (whose recovered head Hercules has just restored fourfold from his own house to the outraged infernal powers), who comes forward to persuade his deliverer back to life. He has marched to Thebes in haste, on hearing of the peril which beset the family of Hercules : his first impression on seeing the scattered corpses is that he has arrived too late, and he slowly learns the truth from Amphitryon's broken words ; while Hercules, with veiled head, lest his very sight should pollute his friend, sits sadly beside his children's bodies. Theseus exclaims, as soon as he has heard the tale of horror—

Hera's this strife. But who is this man, seated

Beside the dead to mourn ?

With an outburst of anguish over the contrast between the past and the present, Amphitryon replies :—  
My son, far-famed for toils, whose shield and spear

On Phlegra's plain, whence gods had else retreated,

Moved giant-hearts to fear.

*Theseus.* Alas ! whoe'er to such ill fate was born ?

\* In his Second Faust.



*Amphitryon.* Ne'er shalt thou mortal see,  
So full of labours and of wanderings.

*Thes.* Why hides he with his robe his  
wretched head?

*Amph.* He seeks thine eye to flee,  
Through shame for blood of children shed,  
Revering still the love that kindred  
brings.

*Thes.* I came that grief to share; un-  
veil it me.

To thee I speak, who sittest in thy  
sorrow,

I bid thee show thy face unto thy friend.  
For darkness has not any cloud so black,  
That it can hide thy fell calamity.

Why still with lifted hand sign thyself  
murderer,

Warning me lest thy speech pollute me?  
How

Should I refuse at last to share thine ill,  
Who often shared thy good success? I look  
Back to the time when, from amongst the  
dead,

Thou brought'st me safe to see the light of  
day;

And hate that gratitude which time en-  
feebles,

The man who willing shares in prosperous  
things,

But leaves the storm-tossed bark that  
bears a friend.

Rise, and unveil thy mournful head; look  
at us.

'Tis noble to endure a god-sent woe.

*Her.* Theseus, hast thou beheld my  
children's fate?

*Thes.* Both heard have I, and seen, thy  
heavy woe.

*Her.* Why then unto the sun unveil  
my head?

*Thes.* Why not? can mortal man pol-  
lute a god?

*Her.* Yet flee my foul pollution, wretch-  
ed one!

*Thes.* A friend can bring no curse upon  
his friend.

*Her.* Right: my good deeds' requital  
I accept.

*Thes.* I, once by thee preserved, now  
show thee pity.

*Her.* Most pitiable am I, who slew my  
children.

*Thes.* I mourn thy kindness shown to  
other's woes.

*Her.* Whom hast thou found whose  
grief is more than mine?

*Thes.* None: smitten as thou art by  
plague from heaven.

*Her.* Therefore I am preparing me to  
die.

*Thes.* Think'st thou the god will heed  
thy threats?

*Her.*

The god

Is self-willed; I, a man, am self-willed  
too.

*Thes.* Silence! lest proud words bring  
more sorrows down.

*Her.* I am full of woes; I have not  
not room to hold

Another.

*Thes.* But what wilt thou, raging  
thus?

*Her.* By death go whence I came, be-  
neath the earth.

*Thes.* Thou speakest as some common  
man might speak.

*Her.* Thou, free from trouble, well  
canst tutor me.\*

*Thes.* Speaks thus the much-enduring  
Hercules?

*Her.* He would not if his woe knew any  
bounds.

Presently his grief ceases to fall  
thus slowly in big thunder-drops,  
but pours itself forth in a faster tor-  
rent, bemoaning his life begun under  
evil auspices; its foundation-stone  
ill laid by a hand polluted by a  
grandsire's blood; its course a prey  
from its very beginning to Hera's  
malice; the "coping-stone" of his  
sorrows now newly placed by his  
children's murders. Why should  
not the renowned consort of Zeus  
be left to dance with joy at her  
victory over the foremost man of  
Greece? Why should he live to be  
pointed at by the finger of scorn,  
and not hide his defeated head in  
the grave? Theseus persuades and  
entreats, and at last prevails. It  
suddenly occurs to Hercules that it  
would be an act of cowardice to  
stand aside from "the slings and  
arrows of outrageous fortune," in  
the grave's safe shelter; and he  
consents to live and accept the  
asylum which his friend offers him  
in Athens. He intrusts the dear  
charge of burying his dead to his  
old father, since he may not himself  
undertake it; and, turning again  
and again to embrace them and give  
them his last farewells, is hardly  
led away at last by the faithful  
friend, who says, kindly if irrel-

\* Compare with this "He has no children," in "Macbeth."

giously,—“When the gods honour us, we need no friend; thou need’st one now.”

There is deep pathos in this portion of the departing speech of Hercules:—

Yet labours sore and many have I tasted,  
Never refusing one; nor ever dropping  
O’er them the waters of the eye, nor  
thought

Ever to come to this, that I should weep.  
But now it seems I must be fortune’s  
slave:

So be it. Thou dost see, old man, mine  
exile.

Thou seest me of my children murderer.  
Commit these corpses to the tomb: com-  
pose them,

Honouring them with thy tears—to me  
forbid.

Lay them upon their mother’s breast,  
within

Her arms, poor mates in woe! whom I  
more wretched

Destroyed unwilling. . . .

Children! oh my children!  
Your father who begat you slew you too.  
Nor have you tasted the fair things pre-  
pared

By me with mighty toil and force of arms—  
Glory for you, and for your sire rich joys.  
Thee, too, unhappy wife, I ill have guer-  
doned,

In guise not fitting thy tried faithfulness,  
Thy long and lonely watch at home—with  
death.\*

Whatever fault we may find with the “Frenzied Hercules,”—whether on moral grounds charging it with impiety, or on artistic, objecting to the conclusion as too tame for the preceding portions; or again, to the whole play as too painful to answer the purpose of dramatic art,—there can be no question that the picture, if of too unrelieved a blackness, has yet been most powerfully painted. It is one of three or four by the same hand, which, by their steadfast gloom, stand in strong contrast to the majority of his works, checkered as they mostly are by a light shining forth from their deepest clouds. And if it is permissible to the dra-

matist, as the greatest examples seem to say it is, to torment the sensitive spectator by the sight of unprovoked and undeserved misery left to the end unalleviated, Euripides has executed his sombre task with marvellous skill. Let the reader cast his eye over this brief sketch, and say if there is a single scene or a single incident in the play which does not tend to deepen the horror of its catastrophe.

Every reminiscence of the prowess of Hercules, every glimpse given us of his parental and conjugal tenderness—the exhibition (purposely protracted) of Megara and her children trembling on the brink of that abyss which a beloved hand first saves them from, then casts them down—the natural exultation of Hercules in his victory, and his lively sense of the preciousness of the blood which he is so soon to spill,—all alike contribute to the same result. And what a master of pathos does Euripides here prove himself! How does the memory of past happy days enhance present misfortune in his hands! With what efficacy do these tears drop on the beholder’s heart, which he shows us slowly trickling from eyes as unused as Othello’s to shed them! His Pentheus and his Jason deserve their misfortunes. His innocent Hippolytus ends his by death. His Hercules alone must, though guiltless, live and suffer on.

The subject of the “Trachiniae” of Sophocles, as profoundly tragic as that of the play we have just considered, is yet less painful; mainly because it closes leaving no bleeding heart unhealed by death. Its story, though simple in the extreme, unfolds a double tragedy—the tragedy of Hercules, who, being the strongest of men, is doomed by the strange irony of fate to owe his

\* The foregoing versions from the “Frenzied Hercules” have never before appeared in print. Those which follow from the “Trachiniae” are, as has been already said, extracted from Mr Campbell’s translation.



death (like other mighty men) to the hand of a woman: the yet sadder tragedy of Deianeira, who, being the tenderest of wives, yet slays her husband by the means whereby she thinks to regain his love. For Deianeira differs in this from her mother Althæa, that fate which gave to the one power of life and death over her husband, as to the other over her son, gave the dread boon in the one case to an ignorant, in the other to a conscious, hand. Althæa saw the Fates spinning in the grey twilight of dawn, heard their words about the log on which her son's life depended, and replaced it years later on the fire with full purpose to slay Meleager; but Nessus gave his deadly gift to Deianeira disguised as a love-charm, and it is with the innocent purpose of recalling his affections to their rightful object that the wife despatches the poisoned robe which is to kill her husband. The circumstances which lead to her sending the deadly gift fill up the early part of the play, as its later is filled with the consequences of her deed. At its very commencement the poet takes care to impress us strongly with his hapless heroine's character as a fond and faithful wife. She complains sadly to a trusted slave of her husband's long and frequent absences from her and from the children she has borne him. Since his slaughter of Iphitus banished them to Trachis, he has been fifteen months absent, nor can she learn where; moreover, when he departed he left an oracle behind him, purporting that this expedition must end either in his death or in a long period of glorious rest after his labours. She fears more than she hopes; and her fears are to be realised before her hopes. Her son

Hyllus brings her tidings of his father's Lydian bondage, whereby he expiated the blood he had shed amiss; and of the siege which he is now laying to Cæchalia, on the opposite coast of Eubœa, to revenge the wrongs he had suffered from its king, Eurytus. Eubœa was the place named by the oracle, and Hyllus is at once dismissed by his mother to his father's aid. She remains behind, a prey to anxieties which the well-meant consolations of the maidens of Trachis (the Chorus) are unable to dispel. The maid cannot enter into the troubles which beset the wife and mother. Deianeira says:—

My inward woe,  
Be it ever as unknown to you, as now!  
So large the pasture of his own delight  
Where, free youth rangeth, and nor heat  
o' the sun,  
Nor rain, nor tempest, ruffleth him at all,  
But still he rears a life of joyous ease,  
So high as to the point where maiden turns  
To woman, and the cares of night are  
known,  
Husband or children ever causing fear.  
Then, imaged through her own calamity,  
Some one may guess the burden of my  
life.

Yet the maidens' song was sympathetic as well as encouraging. We much like Mr Campbell's version of its first part, though it might yet be improved by bringing the antistrophe into correspondence with the strophe. Its second part is much spoiled by its intermixture of blank verse with the rhymed couplet\* at the end of each division. It is wholly unlike a choral ode in form, and most inferior in structure to the version of the same passage by Anstice. We subjoin the first and better portion of the chorus:—

Child of the starry night in her undoing,  
Lulled in her bosom at thy parting glow,  
O Sun! I bid thee show

\* The rhymed couplet which ends some of the *speeches* of the play in Mr Campbell's version may be Shakespearian, but sounds odd in a classic drama.

What journey is Alcmena's son pursuing?

What region holds him now,  
'Mongst winding channels of the deep,  
Or Asian plains, or rugged Western steep?  
Declare it, thou  
Peerless in vision of thy flashing ray.  
For ah! I learn that she alway,  
Poor Deianeira, with an aching breast,  
Sad bride of strife and queen of sore  
unrest,

Like some lorn bird,  
With sorrows ever freshly stirred,  
Ne'er giveth slumber to her wistful eye,  
Nor lets her tears be dry,  
But ever mindful of her husband's way,  
With panics night and day  
Pines on her widowed couch of ceaseless  
thought,

By fear of evil destiny distraught.

But neither Deianeira nor the pitying maidens have long to wait. A messenger enters soon, and makes the Chorus raise their voices in joyful exultation by his tidings of the victory and safety of Hercules. These are shortly after confirmed by the entrance of the herald, Lichas, with a train of captive maidens, and the news of the destruction of their city. He tells of many causes which had provoked Hercules against King Eurytus; but carefully hides the most potent of all, his passion for the king's daughter Iole, who stands at first unmarked amid the captive band. Presently her beauty and dignity attract Deianeira's notice; she looks on her with pitying kindness, and asks her name. Lichas pretends not to know it. Iole weeps and remains silent. The queen dismisses her with almost maternal tenderness, and prepares to set things in order for her lord's return, when her joy is suddenly damped by the messenger, who calls her aside that he may tell her of a terrible discovery that he has made. Lichas has deceived her, the lovely captive is the king's daughter, and the real cause of the wrath of Hercules against her father: his mistress has henceforth a rival in her husband's love.

Deianeira hears this disclosure

with grief, but without anger; and the womanly dignity which distinguishes her throughout the play makes her suppress all outward show of sorrow, after one or two hasty, bewildered exclamations, and turn with apparent calmness to gain a confirmation of the tale from Lichas. In doing so she reveals how much she has endured already, and how patiently; and half unconsciously exaggerates her own power of endurance that she may encourage the herald to speak.

#### DEIANEIRA.

Nay, I entreat thee by his name, whose  
fire  
Lightens down Ceta's topmost glen, be  
not  
A niggard of the truth. Thou tell'st thy  
tale  
To no weak woman, but to one who  
knows  
That man is never constant to one joy.

If thou fearest,

Thou hast no cause—for doubtfulness is  
pain,  
But to know all, what hurts it? Many  
a love  
Hath fettered him ere now, and none  
hath borne  
Reproach or evil word from me. She  
shall not,  
Though he were drownèd in affection's  
spell.  
Since most mine eye hath pitied her,  
because  
Her beauty was the ruin of her life;  
And, all unweeting, she her own bright  
land,  
Poor hapless one, hath ravaged and en-  
slaved.

Thus encouraged, Lichas owns the truth, and takes upon himself the blame of a concealment unenjoined by his master. Then, as if smitten by a sudden misgiving, he conjures his mistress, for her own sake as well as for her husband's, to look kindly upon Iole—

For he, whose might is in all else supreme,  
Is solely overmastered by her love.

There is something ominous in the injured woman's dull, indif-



ferent tone of acquiescence: it seems the lull before the storm,—too calm to be natural,—when Deianeira assures the herald that she means not to fight against the gods, and that he must wait till she bids him depart with a message and befitting gifts for her lord. What those gifts are the audience instantly divine. The Centaur Nessus, slain long ago for an insult to the newly-wedded Deianeira by the poisoned arrow of Hercules, prepared himself a distant but sure revenge by bidding her save the blood which issued from the wound, and anoint with it a robe for her husband, to keep him faithful to herself. Some doubt or instinctive reluctance has withheld her hitherto, often as her patience has been tried; perchance till now she only heard of her rivals—did not see one stand before her in the brilliance of youthful beauty—but now she feels that all her peace is at stake. The mood, indeed, does not last which prompts to indignation, as she thinks of her own ill-requested truth,—

Such generous meed  
For faith in guarding home this dreary  
while  
Hath the kind Hercules, our trusty  
spouse,  
Sent in return.

But her own future fate fills her  
with self-pity, as she reflects  
how—

One bloom is still advancing, one doth  
fade,  
The budding flower is plucked; the full-  
blown head  
Is left to wither, while love passeth by  
On the other side. My fear is simply  
this:  
He will be called my husband, but her  
mate,  
For she is younger.

The song of the Trachinian maidens outside must smite her ear like a dirge for her buried youth, while they sing how the hero who slights her now fought for her hand but a few years ago, and won it after a desperate single combat with Achelotus, the river-god. While their voices rise and fall as they rehearse the conflict, the pale queen smears a rich robe with the deadly poison, closes it (as the wily Centaur bade) from the sunlight in a coffer, and then comes forth to give it, after a brief consultation with the Chorus, to the herald, that he may bear it to his master. Lichas gladly departs with the seeming proof that his indiscretion has done no harm. Deianeira remains, doubtful indeed of the strange charm's perfect success, but without a suspicion that what she has done can hurt her husband.\* And the Chorus, left alone, sing a song of exulting joy for the approaching return of Hercules. Mr Campbell's version is good and spirited, as in the preceding chorus; but, as in it, too regardless of the structure of the original:—

## I.

“O ye who haunt the strand  
Where ships in quiet land  
Near Æta's height and the warm rock-  
drawn well,  
And ye round Melis' inland gulf who  
dwell,  
Worshipping her who wields the golden  
wand  
(There Hellas' wisest meet in council  
strong):  
Soon shall the flute arise  
With sound of glad surprise,  
Thrilling your sense with no unwelcome  
song,  
But tones that to the harp of Heavenly  
Muse belong.

\* It is now that Ovid (in his 'Epistles of Heroines') imagines Deianeira's mingled resentment and love, as poured forth in rhetorical reproaches better suited in their artful passion to some wronged beauty of the Augustan court than to the simpler sentiment of earlier times, such as:—

Cœpisti melius quam desinis: ultima primis --  
Cedunt; dissimiles hic vir et ille puer.  
Quem non mille feras, quem non Steneleus hostis,  
Non potuit Juno vincere, vincit Amor.

## II.

Jove and Alcmena's son,  
 With spoils of virtue won,  
 Is speeding glorious to his home, whom  
 we,  
 Twelve weary months of blind expect-  
 ancy,  
 Lost in vast distance from our country  
 gone.  
 While, sadly languishing, his loving  
 wife,  
 Still flowing down with tears,  
 Pined with unnumbered fears.  
 But now the war-god, stung to furious  
 strife,  
 Frees him for ever from the toilsome  
 life.

## III.

O let him come to-day !  
 Ne'er may his vessel stay,  
 Gliding with feathery sweep of many an  
 oar,  
 Till, from his altar by yon island shore,  
 Even to our town he wind his prosper-  
 ous way,  
 In mien returning mild,  
 And inly reconciled,  
 Since that anointing to his heart hath  
 grown,  
 By the dark Centaur's wizard speech fore-  
 shown."

Scarcely has the sound of this hope-  
 ful song died away, when Deianeira  
 rushes in with far other mien than  
 that she wore before. Despond-  
 ent sorrow has given place to terror.  
 She hastens to tell the Chorus the  
 cause of her alarm. She had left  
 the piece of wool, with which she  
 anointed the robe, lying in the sun-  
 light, and straightway it crumbled  
 into nothing, corroded as by some  
 powerful destructive agent. How  
 if the garment so prepared harm  
 the body instead of healing the  
 soul of Hercules? She had only  
 the word of Nessus for its good  
 effects. Was she not a fool to be-  
 lieve it?

For wherefore should the Centaur, for  
 what end,  
 Show kindness to the cause for whom  
 he died?  
 That cannot be. But seeking to de-  
 stroy

His slayer, he cajoled me. This I  
 learn  
 Too late, by sad experience, for no-  
 good.  
 And if I err not now, my hapless fate,  
 Is all alone to be his murderess.

And yet of this I am resolved, if aught  
 Harm him, my life shall follow at a  
 bound.  
 She cannot bear to live in evil fame,  
 Who cares to have a nature pure from  
 ill."

The Chorus try to bid her hope,  
 but they evidently feel little hope  
 themselves: they bid her take com-  
 fort from her good intention; she  
 replies that they would not speak  
 of comfort if they felt her woe.  
 And, as she speaks, her son enters  
 to confirm her worst forebodings;  
 wishing her with loud and pas-  
 sionate reproaches either dead or  
 not his mother, since she has slain  
 her husband and his father this very  
 day. Then in answer to her falter-  
 ing questions, he narrates in clear  
 terrible words how Hercules was  
 standing, proudly arrayed in her  
 fatal gift, to offer the firstlings of  
 the spoil as a thanksgiving sacrifice,  
 when, in the glow of the altar fires,  
 the poison (inactive in the dark)  
 leapt into sudden and deadly ac-  
 tivity.

Then came  
 The tearing pangs within his bones, and  
 then  
 The poison feasted like the venom'd  
 tooth  
 Of murdering basilisk.

Then the great throng  
 Saddened their festival with piteous wail,  
 For one \* in death and one in agony.  
 And none had courage to approach my  
 sire,  
 Convulsed upon the ground, then thrown  
 i' the air,  
 With horrid yells and crying, till the  
 cliffs  
 Echoed around, the mountain promon-  
 tories  
 Of Locris, and the forelands of Eubœa.

At last he commanded his son to  
 bear him to die elsewhere. They

\* Lichas, slain by Hercules as his wife's presumed accomplice.



have rowed a bark across with the sad freight, and are about to carry him into the presence of his murderess. Dead or dying, she may look, if she so pleases, on him—  
Thy spouse, whose like thou ne'er wilt see again.

There are moments of life which the greatest artists despair of painting. An inferior though still great dramatist, Euripides for instance, would have placed an appropriate speech in Deianeira's mouth on receiving these sad tidings, and listening to this dreadful accusation. Sophocles does better, because more completely in accordance with nature. Having, here as in the "King (Edipus)," to depict a noble-minded woman, who, after a torturing suspense, receives the assurance that she has unwittingly committed one of the greatest of imaginable crimes, he here, as there, seals her lips in silence, and bids her depart wordless, because hopeless, to seek the only refuge which a pagan could know for shame and anguish such as hers—death. How can Deianeira care, absorbed as she is in contemplation of the fatal consequences of her deed, what construction men may place on the deed itself? How seek to justify herself before her son, when she is about to take swift and sharp vengeance for her husband on her own breast? Ovid, indeed, imagines that trembling hand as yet capable of guiding the pen, and inditing a touching farewell\* to life; but Sophocles, with truer insight, provides a sharper steel to write with redder ink, in more indelible characters, his hapless heroine's justification. When Deianeira (heedless of the entreaty

of the Chorus) has swiftly and silently departed, the maidens remain overpowered for a while by the thought of how exactly, and in how gloomy a sense, the oracle of which they were told in the morning of this evil day, and others, have found their fulfilment:—

See how swift the word of doom,  
From the prophet-voice of old,  
Children, to our life hath come,  
Once that clearly had foretold;  
When the moon with perfect round  
Courses twelve times twelve had run,  
And the final season's bound  
Had been travelled by the sun,  
Then should cease for Jove's own child  
Toil on toil continual piled.  
Now that vessel borne of thought  
Truly is to haven brought.

For when eyes have looked their last,  
How can labour come again?  
How, when will and thought are past,  
Can he e'er be slave to pain?

The springs of sorrow are unbound,  
And such an agony disclose,  
As never from the hand of foes,  
T' afflict the life of Hercules was found.  
O dark with battle-stains, world-champion spear,  
That from Echalía's highland leddest then,  
This bride that followed swiftly in thy train;  
How fatally overshadowing was thy fear!  
Fatal indeed! for, as they sing, the sound of loud wailing is heard within the house, and an aged nurse comes forth to tell them of the death of her mistress:—

Our queen hath found her latest journey's end,  
Even now departing, without stirring foot.

With her pathetic recital may be contrasted that of the handmaid of Alcestis, from which, as from it, Virgil borrowed touches in his death of Dido: Alcestis, the young

\* Ovid's concluding lines are pathetic in the extreme, especially three words in the last:—

"Impia quid dubitas, Deianeira mori?  
Jamque vale, seniorque pater, germanaque Gorge,  
Et patria, et patrie frater adempte tue!  
Et tu, lux oculis hodierna novissima nostris;  
Virque (sed ó possis!), et puer Hylle, vale!"

wife whom all applaud, who has only the life she gives up to save her husband's to regret; far happier than Deianeira, the mournful matron, pouring forth, amid general execrations, her blood as an unavailing libation, over her slain lord. The nurse says of her :—

When she had entered all alone within

She hid herself, and fell at the altar's foot,

And loudly cried that she was left forlorn :

And taking in her touch each household thing

That formerly she used, poor lady, wept O'er all; and then went ranging through the rooms,

Where, if there caught her eye the well-loved form

Of any of her household, she would gaze

And weep aloud, accusing her own fate

And her abandoned lot, childless henceforth !

When this was ended, suddenly I see her Fly to the hero's room of genial rest.

With unsuspecting gaze o'ershadowed near,

I watched, and saw her casting on the bed

The finest sheets of all, and when 'twas done,

She leapt upon the couch where they had lain

And sat there in the midst. And the hot flood

Burst from her eyes before she spake : "Farewell

My bridal bed, since never more shalt thou

Receive me lying to await my lord."

Then, ere her son (too late convinced of her innocence) could rush to prevent the blow, she stabbed herself to the heart.

The unhappy Hyllus, whom the nurse left accusing himself of his mother's death,

With passionate sobs And cries and wild embracings of the dead,

has soon to rouse himself that he may go forth and meet his dying father. Soon the last choric song \*

rises in mournful wails to herald the entrance of the long-expected hero. Not as men had looked for, flushed with victory from his last triumph, strong with a strength that none can subdue, Hercules makes his first appearance amid the shouts of an exulting multitude. But with bated breath, lest they rouse once more to fierce activity the pangs which have left him a moment of merciful insensibility, the maidens see carried in, stretched out helpless on a litter (his weeping son at his side), the mighty champion whose arm (till he began to use it for selfish ends) had proved too strong for Death himself. Now at last has come the day when death, the sometime foe, is invoked as the last remaining friend. As the pain awakens Hercules from his brief slumber, he calls for it with wild prayers, mingled with lamentations and vows of vengeance on his treacherous wife.

#### HERCULES.

O altar on the Euboean strand,

High-heaped with offerings from my hand,

What meed for lavish gifts bestowed

From thy new sanctuary hath flowed ?

Oh vex me not, touch me not, leave me to rest,

To sleep my last sleep on earth's gentle breast.

You touch me, you leave me, you turn me again,

You break me, you kill me ! O pain ! O pain !

You have pampered the pang that had slumbered still.

It comes, it hath seized me with tyrannous will.

Where are ye, men, whom over Hellas wide

This arm hath freed, and o'er the ocean tide,

And through rough brakes, from every monstrous thing ?

But now in my misfortune none will bring A sword to aid, a fire to quell this fire.

\* In it there occurs a line which should be got rid of, if possible, "By agony ineradicable o'er-raught." The first stanza, too, should be remodelled, and a better word substituted for "con" in its third line : "'Tis hard for me hapless to con."



Sweet Hades, with swift death,  
Brother of Jove, release my suffering  
breath.\*

Many hot toils and hard beyond report,  
With hands and struggling shoulders  
have I borne,

But no such labour hath the Thunderer's  
wife,†

Or sour Eurystheus ever given, as this,  
Which Æneus' daughter of the treacher-  
ous eye

Hath fastened to my back, this amply  
woven

Net of the Furies, that is breaking me.

For, glued unto my side, it hath devoured  
My flesh to the bone, and, lodging in the  
lungs,

It drains the vital channels, and hath  
drunk

The fresh life-blood, and ruins all my  
frame,

Foiled in the tangle of this viewless bond.  
Yet me nor Lapiths, nor Earth's giant  
brood,

Nor Centaur's monstrous violence could  
subdue,

Nor Hellas, nor the stranger, nor all lands  
Where I have gone, cleansing the world  
from harms.

But a soft woman without manhood's  
strain

Alone and weaponless hath conquered me.

Nay, shrink not, son, but pity me, whom  
all

May pity—me, who like a tender girl  
Am heard to weep aloud. This none  
could say

He saw in me of old ; for, murmuring not,  
I went with evil fortune, silent still ;

Now, such a foe hath found the woman  
in me !

Ay, but come near ; stand by me, and be-  
hold

What cause I have for crying.

O breast and back,  
O hands and arms of mine, ye are the  
same

That crushed the dweller of the Némæan  
wild,

The lion unapproachable and rude,  
The ox-herd's plague, and Hydra of the  
lake

Of Lerna, and the twy-form prancing  
throng

Of Centaurs, insolent, unsociable,  
Lawless, ungovernable ; the monster huge

Of Erymanthus, and the three-necked  
whelp

Of Pluto underground, a perilous fear !  
The dangerous basilisk, and, on the verge

Of Earth, the dragon guarding fruits of  
gold.

These toils and others countless I have  
tried,

And none hath triumphed on my strength.  
But now,

Jointless and riven to tatters, I am  
wrecked

Thus utterly by imperceptible woe ;  
I proudly named Alcmena's child, and his

Who reigns in highest heaven, the king  
supreme.

Ay, but even yet, I tell ye, even from  
here

Where I am nothingness and cannot move,  
She who hath done this thing shall feel  
my power.

It is at this point that the young  
Hyllus gains a hearing at last, and

tells the sad tale of his mother's  
death, and of the fatal error which

has been the ruin of them all. His  
father listens, at first incredulous,

and then convinced. When his son  
finally ascribes the whole to the long-

prepared vengeance of the Centaur  
Nessus, Hercules sees his fate (fore-

shown before) accomplished, and

\* It seems a pity to lose, as we do here, the touching effect of the twice-repeated *εὐναόων*. Might we suggest,—

"Zeus brother, Hades sweet !

Come with swift feet.

My anguished watch bid me no longer keep !

Lay me to sleep at last ; lay me to sleep !"

† Ovid makes him dwell more on Juno's agency :—

"Cladibus, exclamat, Saturnia, pascere nostris :

Pascere : et hanc pestem spectâ, crudelis, ab alto :

Corque ferum satia, vel si miserandus et hosti,

(Hostis enim tibi sum) diris cruciatibus agram,

Invisamque animam, natamque laboribus aufer,

Mors mihi munus erit. Decet hæc dare dona novercam.

His elisa jacet moles Nemœa lacertis ?

Hæc cœlum cervicis tuli? defessa jubendo est

Sæva Jovis conjux ; ego sum indefessus agendo.

Sed nova pestis adest ; cui nec virtute resisti,

Nec talis armisve potest."—Met. ix.

ceases to strive against it, exclaiming—

My sire

Forewarned me long ago that I should die  
By none who lived and breathed, but from  
the will

Of one now dwelling in the house of death.  
And so this Centaur, as the voice divine  
Then prophesied, in death hath slain me  
living.

Yea, and consenting with that ancient  
word,

Fresh oracles I will disclose, which I  
Took note of, when I came within the  
grove

Of the hill-roving and earth-couching  
Selli,

Dictated to me by the tremulous tongue  
Innumerable, of my father's tree;  
Declaring that my ever-instant toils  
Should in the time that now hath being  
and life

End and release me. And I looked for  
joy,

But the true meaning plainly was my  
death.

No labour is appointed for the dead.

After this mournful interpretation of the promise which had long cheered his labours, Hercules exacts an oath from his son to do his bidding, and then commands him to raise his funeral pile on Mount Ceta. No murmur against Zeus escapes his own lips; although the bystanders reproach him as having deceived his great son with false hopes, and been unmindful of his fortunes to the end. And when Hyllus at first refuses to be his father's murderer, Hercules replies, "Not so, but healer of my life." The anguish which the flames are so soon to burn away recedes from view, the dearly-purchased bride is resigned without reluctance to the hand of another, and the strong man sets his face strongly to death. Attended by Hyllus, and followed by the mournful Iole and the maidens of Trachis, the hero's form disappears from our sight as the sad procession winds along the woody glen towards its sad goal,—the pile of oak, olive, and pine wood on Mount Ceta's top. And so the play ends: no messenger comes back

to us to depict the demeanour of Hercules on his funeral pyre; no descending deity mitigates its profoundly tragic effect by a declaration of the glory and gladness reserved for the hero's immortal, after the flames had done their worst upon his mortal, part; of the fairer bride than Iole who waits for him on Olympus.

It is only from another play, the "Philoctetes," that we learn that Sophocles assented to the universal traditions which made the pure gold of the diviner nature, derived by Hercules from Zeus, come forth radiant and resplendent from the fire which consumed the dross of baser passions and human defects which he received from his mortal mother. There, and there alone, of the extant plays of Sophocles, a divine being floats down at the close of the drama to calm disquietudes and end perplexities too great for mortal hand to dissolve. And the demigod who accomplishes this—who promises to Philoctetes relief from his long anguish, and sends him forth to conquer Troy—is his old companion and friend, the once labouring but now gloriously-resting Hercules. Doubtless Sophocles, alive to the danger of "spoiling one effect without producing another," felt that he might safely deepen the shades which gather round the close of the "Trachiniæ," and yet trust an Athenian audience to interpret aright the calm into which his hero settles when the worst is known, and his assurance that the fire for which he calls shall be, not his destruction, but his healing. For had they not long ago learned from Homer that the shade met by Odysseus in the nether world, was merely the shadowy counterfeit of Hercules? That it was (so to speak) the voice of the hero's past which addressed him sympathetically with—

"Zeus-born Laërtiades, Odysseus wise,



Is thy life sad like mine beneath the  
sun?  
I was the child of Zeus, but miseries  
Bore without number, the fond slave of  
one  
Far meaner, who much taskwork, hardly  
done,  
Laid on me ;"—

whereas his real self has ceased to  
need the bent bow which shot so  
true, or the wondrous sword-belt  
which "gleamed like a fire," for—

"He, the true form, among the gods at  
ease,  
Wed to fair-ankled Hebe, still doth sit,  
Feasting." \*

Had not Pindar, "the Theban  
eagle," sung to them the Theban  
hero's honours, his toils by land  
and sea ended, Hera's long envy  
laid aside, and his entrance into a  
golden mansion on Olympus as the  
honoured friend of the immortals †? Still, to readers familiar with the Latin poets before they make acquaintance with the Greek, the close of the "Trachiniæ" is disappointing. They remember how Horace again and again uses Hercules as his type of true valour triumphing over all hindrances—sometimes too pathetically, as the symbol of how death "openeth the gate to good fame and extinguisheth envy," as in the well-known—

"Diram qui contudit hydram,  
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit,  
Comperit invidiam supremo fine domari.  
Urit enim fulgore suo, qui prægravat artes  
Infrase positas: extinctus amabitur idem."

Above all, who can forget the splendid picture which Ovid has painted, conspicuous by its unwonted dignity among his rich and brilliant designs, of Hercules reposing, after all his toils, on the lion-skin spread on the funeral pile (his head pillowed on his club), with serene and cheerful countenance, as though amid the

garlands and wine-cups of the banquet? Philoctetes stands below, having just set fire to the mighty structure; holding his friend's bequest, the quiver and the bow—

"Regnaque visuras iterum Trojana sagittas."

Hercules is surveying with unmoved face the friendly flames, before whose approach there is no shrinking in his mighty limbs, no tremor in his vast frame; while the gods feel the terror to which he is a stranger, and look down dismayed from Olympus at the peril of the "world's defender." Jove himself gazes with pride and pleasure on his worthy son, and allays their apprehensions in the words:—

"Omnia qui vicit, vincet, quos cernitis,  
ignes;  
Nec nisi maternâ Vulcanum parte potentem  
Sentiet. Æternum est, à me quod traxit,  
et expers  
Atque immune necis, nullâque domabile  
flammâ." ‡

And then how magnificent is this great picture's sequel! the disentanglement of the immortal from the mortal part, when, the fire having "devastated" all that lay subject to its ravages, the mortal mother's features disappear, to leave the mighty father's likeness alone behind; and (like some great serpent slipping off his old scaly vest, to glisten in renewed gold before the sun) Hercules rises up from where he has left his earthly frame, grander in presence than before, imperial, awe-inspiring, to mount in Jove's chariot to the shining stars!

"Interea, quodcunque fuit populabile  
flammæ,  
Mulciber abstulerat; nec cognoscenda remansit,  
Herculis effigies; nec quidquam ab imagine  
ductum

\* Worsley's *Odyssey*, Book xi.

† Pindar, *Is. Ode*, iv.

‡ Who conquered all things, shall those fires subdue,  
Nor aught in him save what his mother claims  
Feel Vulcan's might; while what from me he drew,  
Eternal, death-exempt, shall mock the flames.

Matris habet ; tantumque Jovis vestigia  
 servat.  
 Utque novus serpens, positâ cum pelle  
 senectâ,  
 Luxuriare solet, squamâque nitere recenti,  
 Sic ubi mortales Tirynthius exuit artus  
 Parte sui meliore viget, majorque videri  
 Cœpit, et angustâ fieri gravitate verendus.  
 Quem pater omnipotens, inter cava nubila  
 raptum,  
 Quadrijugo curru radiantibus 'intulit  
 astris."

The readers who may have followed us in our rapid survey of the two Greek tragedies of which Hercules is the hero, will scarcely need to be told that neither of them is reckoned its author's masterpiece. But the "*Trachiniæ*" is more decidedly inferior to the "*King Œdipus*" of Sophocles than is the "*Frenzied Hercules*" to the "*Medea*" of Euripides. A comparison of the two plays is therefore not altogether unfair to the weaker dramatist. Their design is the same,—to contrast "man's majesty with his misery," and to do so in the person of the greatest of men. The first point of difference between the two tragic authors is in the various nature of the means employed by them to produce that misery—Euripides relying on mental, Sophocles on physical, suffering ; a suffering, too, depicted by him in the "*Trachiniæ*," as in the "*Philoctetes*," with almost repulsive minuteness. Nevertheless, the anguish of the dying Hercules is not, as we might at first suppose, the simple result of bodily pain ; it is as the effect of his wife's treason (a treason, too, which his own conscience tells him has not been unprovoked) that the torture which he endures affects Hercules so sorely ; and there are few grander instances of the power of the mind over the body (depicted by a skilful observer of human nature), than the calmness with which, when the suspicion of that treason has been dispelled, the hero addresses himself to die. If, on this point, Sophocles is more nearly on an equality with

Euripides than a superficial glance might lead us to think, there is another on which he decidedly surpasses him—namely, the way in which the catastrophe is evolved from the previous occurrences of the drama. Hercules, with his own hand, fires the train of causes which finally produce his death in the "*Trachiniæ* ;" but the terrible afflictions which beset him in the tragedy of Euripides are due to the wrath of a goddess which he does nothing in the course of the drama to provoke, and only stand connected with its previous incidents by the sequence of events—not in any way as effect stands related to cause. And if Sophocles brings about his catastrophe in a more artistic manner than Euripides, in like manner does he surpass him in the catastrophe itself. The close of the "*Trachiniæ*" is at once less painful to the mind, and more striking, more awfully grand to the eye, of the beholder, than that of the "*Frenzied Hercules*." The strong man, utterly broken down by sorrow, turning back towards the corpses of his wife and children, and hardly led away from them by the faithful friend on whom he leans, is at once a sadder and a less impressive sight than the suffering hero, borne in solemn procession towards the purifying flames of Ceta. The Hercules of Sophocles has more of human frailty and error than the hero of Euripides, and therefore his misfortunes, though great, do not strike us with the same painful sense of their injustice as his do. Like his Hebrew prototype, the Hercules of the "*Trachiniæ*" falls through the indulgence of passion ; we may believe that had he resisted it, the auguries concerning him would have been fulfilled in a better sense, even as the conclusion of the play leaves us not without hope of that ultimate accomplishment. But the Hercules of Euripides suffers without deserving it ; and, in his



case, we have no hint of any future compensation. On the other hand, we have the advantage in the "Frenzied Hercules" of seeing the hero of the play oftener, and in far more varied situations, than in the "Trachinæ," where his late entrance precludes our beholding him, except as a sufferer. Probably no other great tragedy keeps back the first appearance of its principal character so long. Yet with what art does Sophocles compensate this defect! How well he pervades his whole drama with its hero's invisible presence! She, too, in whose tender heart we see her absent lord constantly reflected, the hapless Deianeira, is a more important personage than the early-slain Megara. The latter is a graceful abstraction of conjugal and maternal tenderness; towards the former we feel as towards a personal acquaintance. And how womanly Deianeira is, both in her faults and in her virtues! She is too timid for perfect frankness and openness, hence her misfortunes; but how gentle in her loving patience! how queenly and dignified in her sorest troubles! Her rival, Iole, would have been an impressive character in the hands of a modern dramatist; we should have been told of her conflicts between love for Hercules and a sense of duty, or she would have been the heroine of an under-plot, loving some one better than her captor. Sophocles does not even suffer us to hear her speak; and engages all our interest for the injured wife and mother. Of the Chorus in each drama, it may be remarked that, while that of Sophocles is more purely lyric, the functions assigned by Euripides to his are not merely lyric but dramatic. The maidens of Trachis exhibit a passive and receptive spirit; the Theban elders interest themselves actively in the scenes before them; and their exulting song of congratulation to

Hercules, checked of a sudden by the dread approach of Iris and Lyssa, is one of the most striking things in the Greek dramas. The interposition of these ministers of Hera's wrath gives an awful and sublime sense of the supernatural to the spectator; though Sophocles' more sparing suggestion of it by means of oracles and prophecies is more in accordance with modern feeling. Each drama contains passages of singularly deep pathos, and, to a considerable extent, of the same nature. When Amphitryon points out his stricken son to Theseus as the man who once fought, shoulder to shoulder, beside the gods; when the dying Hercules enumerates his past exploits, in view of the last goal to which his labours have conducted him,—the beholder is powerfully moved by the difference between what has been and what is. But the Hercules of Sophocles does not rise above (a doubtless just) self-pity; it is his ill-fated spouse who forgets herself to think of him. There is a deeper note sounded by the lamentation of the Hercules of Euripides over his slain wife and her ill-requited faith.

Lastly, we cannot fail to observe that neither play brings out the full spiritual significance of the legend on which it is founded. There are hints, but not more than hints, in the "Frenzied Hercules," of the dim inexplicable feeling which we cannot doubt haunted the mind of antiquity, that if ever the bonds of Hades were burst and its gates thrown open, it could only be at the cost of unexampled anguish; nor does the "Trachinæ" declare to us so plainly as did the earlier Greek and as do the Latin poets, that if ever human nature were to be raised above the stars, it could only be in the person of one whose sorrows as well as his deeds should alike transcend the measure of human doing and suffering.

## CONVIVIUM TEMPLARE :

## A SKETCH ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF FLEET STREET.

SCENE.—*Pleydell's Chambers, No. 10 Parchment Row, Outer Temple. Time, 6½ P.M. In the centre, a table spread, fairly enough, for four, with bright and honest glass, from Powell's; and bright but mendacious plate, from Rippon & Burton's. Around it, a not uncomfortable disorder of easy-chairs, book-shelves, books, some statuettes, more or less maimed in toe and finger, a picture or two, of no particular "school," tobacco-jars and scattered pipes of quaint device and artistic "colour," a pair of dumb-bells, a stray glove, an embroidered smoking-cap, match-boxes, paper-knife, corkscrew, the fifty miscellaneous handy nick-nacks of a bachelor's ménage, and a good many bottles in a corner.*

*Pleydell (as the door opens).* Have Prosser's people sent down as they promised?

*Enter ALBANY, in elaborate evening-dress, ushered in by MISTRESS JINKWATER, widow, and laundress to PLEYDELL.*

*Albany.* They have. "Advectus Romam quo pruna et cottona vento." I and the oysters came in with the same knock. How are you?

*Pleydell.* An idle question, to which no asker pauses for a reply. Sit down, O incorrigible lugger-in-by-the-head-and-shoulders of much-enforced quotations, and wait patiently for the Brethren.

*Alb.* And who are my Brethren?

*Pley.* All the world and his wife, including now, I suppose, the Ashantees, but represented, for this night only, by Raymond and St John.

*Alb.* Raymond? Oh! I remember—the man from the north of Holborn. St John?—the "inglorious Milton" of the shady groves of the Evangelist. If he were only "mute" into the bargain! Well, would they were here! I hunger.

*Pley.* What! a swell, and confess to an appetite so early? Eat then, there are biscuits; drink, there is sherry, and eke "bitters;" or smoke, there are—No! that's not fair! In the name of justice, no fore-stalling! Let the brown bread-and-butter alone!

*Alb.* I bow to the solemn invocation of the "Genius loci." Let neither of them "want of the equal feast." Here they come, I hope.

*The knocker vigorously plied. Enter RAYMOND and ST JOHN, followed by procession of MISTRESS JINKWATER and MASTER WILLIAM J., her offspring, charged with four dozen oysters, and four measures of fluid accompaniment, from the "Cock."*

*Pley.* There! that'll do. Short greeting serves, in time of feasting as of fray. You're all delighted to see one another, of course. Sit, feed, be welcome! Albany, there's a glass of Sauterne for you, with your natives; we prefer the pewter, nous autres.

*Alb.* So I've heard. I am not going to quarrel over my shells. Nay,



I will be conformable. It is good to enlarge experience—"Solon aliquid quotidie addiscens senuit"—and one must howl with the wolves. Let me make assay of that black-draught "mousseux"—[drinks]. H'm, it isn't so very beastly after all.

*Pley.* A most creditable candour. Now, have you fellows the slightest notion what you are going to have for dinner?

*Raymond.* A paid-off mortgage *à la surprise*, with a fine *soupçon* of "singet sheep's head"—an *entrée* of special-pleas *aux petits pois*—a Q.C.'s cauliflower-wig, *au gratin*. What the deuce does it matter? Give Famine victuals, not riddles!

*St John.* Not matter? Marry, but it matters much!

The man who cares not what he has to eat,  
Save when he's got a cold and lost all sense  
Of differing savours, is an idiot,  
Whom 'twere gross flattery——

*Alb.*

Have done with that!

The man who spouts blank verse, when he might talk  
Plain honest prose, is a—no matter what.

*Enter Mrs JINKWATER, with a dish.*

*Alb.* (after careful eyeglass scrutiny). Fried soles, of course! "Ea sola voluptas!" And a substance which is—did I understand you, Mrs. Winkwater (I hope I have not incorrectly caught your maritonymic), to signify "melted butter?" Well, it may be so. Faith is great, though sore are its trials. "Crede quod edis, et edes." They can't, I suppose, be expected to rise beyond fried soles in this district.

*Ray.* You see in "E.C." it isn't easy. Why don't you fellows laugh?

*Alb.* What at? It might be worse, after all. In the *cuisine* of Gray's Inn, I am told, herrings are the *ne plus ultra*, or, on high-days and holidays, "a kind of the net-of-the-newest poor-John." Pass me the Harvey's sauce; thank you.

*St J.* (aside, but sufficiently loud, to RAYMOND).

The maxim holds in all menageries,

You shouldn't irritate a beast at meals.

*Alb.* Thank you, again. "Meaning me a beast," as Rosalind says. No. "Homo sum," and will not, without protest, hear "God's great gift of speech abused" by paronomasiac impertinence.

*Ray.* That's cool! you made a pun yourself not a minute ago!

*Alb.* Did I? Ah! but it was in a learned tongue. "Who would have thought the rabbits understood Latin?" as the "Scholasticus" says in the old jest-book. Boy! will you have the kindness to remove this plate, and supply me with—— Hullo! where's that grinning young imp of yours vanished to, Pleydell?

*Pley.* (with dignity). My clerk, do you mean?

*Alb.* Oh! I beg your joint and several pardon! It was he who sent the Chancellor of the Exchequer, last week, that threepence-halfpenny conscience-money for income-tax, omitted to be returned on his fees. Wasn't it Cowper who said, "I give him joy that's awkward at a lie"? That brat—that ingenuous youth, I mean—is not likely to merit congratulation on such incapacity. I called here, out of sheer curiosity, last Derby-day—for I did not "go see the order of the course"—and he took me for one of Dodson & Fogg's clerks, and said you were "down at

Westminster," and expected back every minute. The lie ran as easily off his tongue as water down a duck's back.

*Ray.* You've missed a quotation there, Albany. Why didn't you say he was "Addictus jurare in verba magistri," and hope the debit for the mendacity would be entered to the right account?

*Alb.* Because I don't care to cite what "every schoolboy knows." But what, in the name of all that is comestible, have we here? Are the viands of the Outer Templars served in gallipots?

*Enter MISTRESS and MASTER J., the former bearing aloft, in a circular vessel of white earthenware, an enormous beef-steak pudding, smoking from the "Cheshire cheese," and the latter the appropriate vegetable accompaniments.*

*Ray.* (with the tone of a qualmish Ramsgate passenger off the North Foreland). "Steward, bring the basin!"

*Alb.* Beast!

*Pley.* Gentlemen! my guests and friends, you see your dinner! What a haggis is to a Scot, what toasted-cheese to a Cambro-Briton, what a sucking-puppy to an epicure of the Flowery Land, what a pound of tallow-candles to a Muscovite serf, what a lump of whale-blubber, washed down by a quart of train-oil, to a starving Esquimaux,—that is the pudding of the "Cheshire-cheese" to the palate of your true chamber-dining Templar! Prepare your nostrils for the fragrance about to curl in grateful steam from the white, fleecy, flaky roof wherein I plunge my knife! an aroma which, had they known it, would have made the Gods of elder days sniff audible satisfaction. To this triumph of culinary skill have all the kindly elements been taxed for liberal contribution: the ox, fattened on Devon's richest pastures, supplies for its basis his succulent steak; the oyster, dredged of old from the Rutupian deeps for the banquets of Cæsars, lends his matchless juice and flavour; the lark of our Sussex downs, earliest and sweetest songster of these northern heavens, died happy, here to be entombed; (*ALBANY, sotto voce*, "Sarcophago contentus!") the kidneys—whew! it is hard to dignify kidneys—"Non rationam di lor," *from ALBANY*)—well, let them do good by stealth, and find in expressive silence their best encomium. These delicate chains that intertwine and lovingly link together the savoury mess were forged by the deft hands of black-eyed lazzaroni on the sunny shores of Hesperian Parthenope; men call them Maccaroni. Etymologists have fancied them the favourite aliment of the happy dwellers in the *μακαρων νησι*. The spices—I allude more particularly to pepper—which impart to it their appetising pungency, were gathered beneath skies more glowing than ours, and have been tossed by every wave which heaves betwixt England and—and—ahem!—wherever they come from. Gentlemen, eloquence fails, and time presses. Eat, and be thankful.

*Alb.* I am so already—that you have stopped. I don't know what the *cuisine* of Paradise was; but Adam himself, as I infer from Milton's account, would not have talked so long on a certain occasion had there been any "fear lest dinner cool."

*Three or four minutes of silence—then*

*Ray.* Pleydell, I'll trouble you——



*St J.* More! give me more! had I a hundred throats——

*Alb.* You'd vent blank verse from each of them, and be a hundred times the nuisance that you are. Pardon me, Pleydell, if I am constrained here to enter my æsthetical protest. What though the deffest plastic hand in Staffordshire may have wrought into its "fair white walls" the tenderest and most ductile *argilla* of our potteries (your eulogy missed that point), I still could wish the containing vessel something more sightly and less provocative of unseemly, not to say nauseous, comment. No:—No more for me, thank you. "Non bis in idem" is a maxim binding on all self-respecting diners-out. Let me not be understood to disparage your dish, but "*placuit semel*."

*Pley.* Well, wash it down then—Burgundy or Champagne.

*Alb.* They used to call the fiery old dukes who held Court at Dijon and Nancy "les princes des bons vins." The Bæchus of Burgundy is a glorious God, but he has begotten an ill-conditioned son whose name is Gout. Let Ganymede minister to me of "the foaming grape of Eastern France."

*Ray.* Pooh! Drink, man! and fear not! Gout is a tuft-hunter and don't stoop to kiss the great toes of little people! Burgundy for me, *sans phrase*. Od's motes and beams, Albany, twice have you twitted my St John because at our feast of reason he lisps in numbers,—all his own at any rate;—you, who can't "liquor up" without hauling in the Laureate by the ears, and palming off upon us, to boot, a gem of citation, which every travelled Paterfamilias may recognise, through all the glitter of your mosaic re-setting, as the property of the useful and laborious author of the Bible of the long vacation, John Murray's immortal Handbook!

*Alb.* Delivered like a Saturday Reviewer! Many an honest simpleton would believe you knew who first said it before him. Well, I forgive you. Let there be peace between us. Memory blots out from her tablets the "trivial fond record" of your atrocious pun. I retract the gibe which angered you with depreciation of the prandial delicacies purveyable from the "*unctæ popinæ*" of Gray's Inn Lane.

*St J.* In happy time—for lo! where bloaters come!

*Pley.* There's a pot of caviare somewhere,—produce it, Mrs J.—and a cruet of Roquefort—and nothing else. I would have given you an apple-pudding, but——

*Ray.* But for the dread of Albany and his inevitable

"Lo! *two* puddings smoked upon the board."

Roquefort is good—very good—very excellent good—but it is yet a creature of too rare a richness for everyday consumption. One wouldn't care to live always in an atmosphere of perfume like the pale-faced wenches in the house of Rimmel. Your simpler cheeses, too, are better peptics,—for instance, the fine old product of the County Palatine giving name to the hostelry to which we are thankful for our pudding.

*Pley.* Ah! that's lost! It disappeared with the old lunch-tables of the old roadside inns of the old coaching-days. By the way, it made your mouth sore for the whole of the next stage:—and how thirsty the coachman always used to be at the end of it!

*Ray.* Gone! lost to "Society," with how many good things beside? There is material for a copious essay on the losses and gains of our modern tables, the decay of the simpler and more innocent edibles, and the simpler tastes that loved them. Look at the apples and pears before us,

large and handsome, I admit, and not deficient in juice and savour. But what has become of their less pretentious ancestors, sweet to the tooth of my boyhood? Where are the honest Russetins and Jennetins, the pippins of Kerry and of Gold, the old-fashioned Bergamots and Swan's-Eggs? Scientific culture has displaced them with more showy but not better successors, and our dessert dishes know them no more. I recollect, on a wall familiar to my youth, a certain blue plum that was—let me not think on't. Where is the quince tree, and where the medlar? Search all the gardens of your parish Alcinous, and your search shall be fruitless. He goes in for force, size, new "sorts," intempestival "primeurs," and horticultural-show prize-cups. Art is ousting nature, and the hothouse is lord of all. Or, pass from the orchard to the parlour—dear old sociable obsolete word—or the kitchen, and remember a score of homely dainties once dear to our unsophisticated palates. No summer eve will ever again proffer to my lips the curdling syllabub—no winter night bring cosy fireside comfort with the clove-spiced elder, or the creaming "egg-hot" or "lamb's-wool!" Shall I never more tear asunder a good honest yeast-dumpling?

*Alb.* Shall I never more besmear my sticky cheeks with bread-and-treacle? never more suck "the sweet poison" of the party-coloured brandy ball? never more swallow the consequent corrective powder disguised in the insidious jam? Bah! Write your essay by all means. The magazine people are liberal paymasters, and, so far as my reading enables me to judge, not over fastidious. Re-renew Smollett's banquet after the manner of the ancients; cry up everything nasty that used to be; and find fault with everything nice that is; and, when the printer's devil has carried off your illegible glorification of the ignorant past, go to bed, and thank heaven that you live in the better taught and better fed present.

*St J.* There is a fashion of man and a fashion of nature. But man's fashion works foolishly in small cycles, and nature's wisely in large. Raymond attacks the former; he ignores, I think, the constant natural extinction and new production of species going on in the vegetable world.

*Alb.* Sensibly prosed, O man of metre! In diet, as in all things else, the "old order changeth, giving place to new;" and the new is better than the old—for the new men. Let him leave the grape, at any rate, out of his catalogue of regrets. Did old Noah get drunk upon such claret as this of Pleydell's? or—does he think he could to-morrow devour, at the club, a fac-simile of Jacob's "savoury meat" with the appetite and relish of Isaac? There were no Crosses and Blackwells in patriarchal times.

*Pley.* Would our ancestors have lived as long, if there had been?

*Alb.* How long *did* they live, as it was? Modern criticism has rather shaken our belief in the almost millennium of Methuselah, and the general longevity of "the world's grey fathers."

*Ray.* I suppose you fancy you are quoting Campbell, and don't know——

*Alb.* Yes, I do. "One poet is another's plagiarist, and this a third's, till they all end in Homer." Campbell was in my mind, though Henry Vaughan used the words before him. I marvel how you happened to be cognisant of it.

*Ray.* Confound you! do you think a man has read nothing, because he is not always flinging the scraps of his reading in your teeth?



*Alb.* I will not stand this eternal nonsense about quoting. What is it you want? Originality? Bosh! There has been no originality for ages! Have I drunk ink? have I fed on the dainties that are in a book? Ay or no? How are you to know I have so banqueted? If my reading did not go forth of me it were all one as though I had it not. If I speak to you the "*ipsissima verba*" of Homer, Plato, Tacitus, Jeremy Taylor, or whom you will of the poets, philosophers, historians, and divines, whom I have at my fingers' ends, you abuse me for a pedant. If I give you the thoughts of my betters, recognisable through the dilution of my own puny phraseology, you sneer at me for a plagiarist. "Now, they that like it, may;—the rest may choose." I am a scatterer of pearls, and you are—no matter. Let me talk my talk; or, take your choice. I will dry you up to the dust of death with statistics—political economy—boredom ineffable of all consolidated British—Association long-windedness,—or I will sit brooding over your intellectual twilight with the curse of my eternal silence. I'll trouble you for the dry toast and the mustard. By the way, what capital words, for a bore, are the "*seccatore*" of the Italians, the fellow who "dries you up;" and the "*quelle scie*" of the Frenchman, the ass who grates and rasps you to madness with "the dull, dry see-saw of his horrible bray"! I suppose the manlier old Romans were not exempt from such social inflictions, but—

*Ray.* Of course not! What was he who button-holed Horatius Flaccus in the *Via Sacra*?

*Alb.* Je vous y attendois. Yet you might have waited till I had done. Doubtless, a specimen of the first magnitude. But why hadn't they a word for the thing? "*Molestus*," or some such adjective, may serve epithetically; but I think you will hardly find in the language a good honest noun. Apropos of bores, has either of you read Oliver Wendell Holmes's '*Poet at the Breakfast-Table*'? No? Then listen. "There is," he says, "one blameless person whom I cannot love, and have no excuse for hating. It is the innocent fellow-creature, otherwise inoffensive to me, whom I find I have involuntarily joined on turning a corner. I suppose the Mississippi, which was flowing quietly along, minding its own business, hates the Missouri for coming into it all at once with its muddy stream. I will not compare myself to the clear or the turbid current, but I will own that my heart sinks when I find that all of a sudden I am in for a corner confluence; and I cease loving my neighbour as myself, till I can get away from him."

*St J.* True, and good. I recollect making a cognate reflection over the waters-meet of the Rhone and the Arve just below Geneva, where the two roll on, ever so far, side by side, but not arm in arm, till gradually "evil communications corrupt good manners," and the almost Mediterranean sapphire of the nobler flood is finally befouled and begrimed by the persevering interpenetrations of the baser, and the whole volume darkens to a complexion like that of Thames beneath us when he dirtiest flows.

*Ray.* I recollect a certain cosy Club of my earlier days, long since levelled with the ground, and a certain kindly Baronet, lost, I fear, for ever to London society, but, wherever he be, a social favourite still. From the threshold of that Club you descended to the street by either of two semicircular flights of steps, tending, of course, towards opposite quarters. And from its portals the Baronet never emerged without a cautious pause

and a rapid reconnaissance of the length of the *pavé* to right and left. "O F——! O my friend!" would he say, with a slight foreign tone and accent, pleasant to hear, but not reproducible by me, "What a happy idea had he, the architect of this Club! I bless his nameless memory! If I see a confounded fool approaching from the City, at once I escape him by the West; if I am aware of an infernal bore arriving from the West-end, I save myself at once in Covent Garden and the East."

*St J.* Ay, I, too, knew him well, and miss him too. Do you mind one afternoon when little Wheezemore shuffled in, brimful of a second edition and overflowing with the details of a family murder of more than ordinary atrocity? The Baronet was, *more suo*, airing the lower part of his back before the reading-room fire. Omitting only the *locus in quo*, but bating no jot of the sickening details, mapping the position, length, breadth, and depth of every mortal gash, with the precision of an inquest-surgeon, rendering every splash of blood and brain on wall and floor with the fidelity of a pre-Raphaelite painter,—little Wheezie gasped out his ghastly tale. The Baronet was deeply moved. "Fr-r-rightful!" he interjected. "Hor-r-rible, my God! the wretch! the execrable monster! And where, my good friend, where, I pray you, was this most appalling tragedy enacted?" "Oh! didn't I mention it? I forget the name of the street; somewhere in Clerkenwell." Sir H—— drew a long breath of relief. "Ah! somewhere in Clerkenwell? Then, I think, my good friend, we may contrive to bear it with some degree of composure."

*Alb.* Amiable cynic!

*Ray.* Perfect! an unconscious photograph! you have painted him to the life in two words. But the cynicism was the mere conventional mask with which you, and I, and all of us, are too apt to hide the natural man, and the amiability was patent through all the flimsy disguise. He would have hanged the murderer with his own hands rather than justice should fail, and been miserable ever after for his share in an act of severity. If you thirst for the more simple unadulterated un-"Simpsoned" milk of human kindness, hear an anecdote of another popular elder of the same synagogue. There strolled in one afternoon the Honourable and Reverend Kingson Tilbury. On his way to the Club, he told us, he had caught a seedily-dressed pickpocket in the act of appropriating his bandana. "And what did you do with him, sir?" asked a deferential youngster. "Do? oh! I let him go, poor devil, for the sake of his wife and family. I dare-say he wasn't a bad sort of fellow at home, don't you know."

*St J.* Ah! the kindly courteous old Soldier-Dean:—the voluminous cambric of his spotless choker carried you back in the spirit to the days of the Regency: a pinch from his ever-liberal box was a social charity that blessed him that gave and him that took alike.

*Alb.* A profoundly interesting series of most sensational reminiscences. Apropos, Pleydell, is your Mrs Blinkwater in the habit of inhaling the aromatic stimulant?

*Pley.* Heaven only knows! Never in my presence. Why?

*Alb.* Oh! the slightest possible *souppçon* of circumstantial evidence. When she set that plate of biscuits before me just now, I sneezed, that's all. I don't know why she shouldn't. Coleridge propounded once an hypothesis that snuff might be the final cause of the human nose.

*St J.* For there was never yet philosopher that didn't talk mere folly at odd times. Small blame to him if any, though he might as reason-



ably, have suggested that a peg-top was the final cause of a schoolboy's breeches-pocket.

*Pley.* Pass the claret. To see a lion in his den is well enough, but one would hardly be a Daniel for the purpose. I don't think I should have cared much for a whole "nicht wi' Coleridge."

*Ray.* Or Carlyle, for that matter, if he talks as he writes.

*St J.* Or Ruskin, for like reason.

*Alb.* Or—may I suggest—Tupper?

*Ray.* Μη γένοιτο! Not while I can read Solomon in the authorised version. I hope that the Revision Committee in the Jerusalem Chamber won't mangle the greatest of royal and noble authors too much.

*Pley.* You tap a grave topic there, Raymond.

*Ray.* I know it: a *very* grave one. I don't much take to a new lectionary pregnant with an awkward admission that we had better skip such and such inspired chapters; and I own I dread the thought of a *new* Bible—not on my own account or yours—but for the sake of Dickon, and Hodge, and Joan.

*St J.* Ay, a universal decimal coinage would be an excellent thing in the end, no doubt; but it would generate no end of present trouble and difficulty, and take many a year to commend itself to a multitude accustomed to twelve penny pieces in a shilling.

*Ray.* The analogy is not altogether perfect, but it sufficiently illustrates my meaning. We have got a grand old text, unimprovable in spirit, scarcely to be amended in diction, accepted—ignorantly, it may be, but how beneficially!—for the better part of three hundred years, as an utterance almost as inspired as its original. Are we to expect for the handiwork of a dozen contemporary clergymen—most respectable persons, but distinguishable from ourselves chiefly by length of gaiter and depth of Hebrew—that veneration which hallows the one great national boon for which England can bless the memory of a Stuart? I would have it done—in the first instance at any rate—by way of notes, retaining the old familiar pages,—with the amended version and its justification, where necessary, at the foot; and carefully eschewing all mere stereotypical "goody" dissertation. I question, too, whether our special era of doubt, criticism, and "cloudy Christianity," is altogether the most opportune moment for the experiment. Some might perhaps think—(PLEYDELL rises and pokes the fire; ST JOHN abstractedly traces imperfect reminiscences of Euclid on the table-cloth; ALBANY yawns audibly). Confound you all; can't you listen for a moment to sense and seriousness? Well, have it your own way! Dixi.

*Alb.* Καὶ περὶ μὲν οὐτῶν τοσαῦτα εἰρήσθω. No—no more wine, thanks. Not without a natural pang at being compelled to desert so much good company, I must be going. My presence is requested shortly at a mid-night modern conversation in the more modish regions of the occident, where Darwin is expected to tickle the ears of a genealogically-curious audience, with some interesting disquisitions upon the steps by which our remote simious progenitors "moved upward working out the beast:" and I would not carry thither on my raiment the abiding flavour of that incense with which I perceive St John preparing to make fragrant your chambers.

*St J.* Will he tell you of any movement among our "poor relations" of the present? Is there no "excelsior!" for modern monkeydom?

May the quadrumana of the nineteenth century never hope to become such as I?

*Alb. (rising).* Spend a series of contemplative Sabbaths with the "upper Ten," among the cages at the Zoo; observe the educational progress of the pupils of the barrel-organ Professors; watch your mirror while shaving; and despair not! A fair good-night, O fraternal triad of improved Apes! (*Exit, as Mrs Jinkwater appears with coffee and liqueur-glasses.*)

*Ray.* Pleydell, you are my friend,—but of all the confounded intolerable puppies——

*St J.* Pleydell, you are my host into the bargain,—but of all the cursed self-sufficient coxcombs——

*Pley.* Fiddle-de-dee! How did Mr Mivins describe Mr Smangle?—"a d——d infernal pleasant gentlemanly dog!" As for his quotations, I confess to a sneaking kindness toward them, and rather like to hear them, as I also rather like to hear you fellows pitch into them. Thackeray—though I did not choose to flatter Albany by saying so while he was here—had now and then a knack of wresting from a quotation a meaning not its own. The conversation at the Club turned, one night, upon the subject of pet-names: and some one cited a lady-friend who said, "I love a pet-name. I like my husband to call me 'mouse!'"—"Ανδρα μου εινεπε Μουσα!" jingled W. M. T. to his next neighbour. I recollect once assisting with him at a *table-d'hôte* dinner at a certain seaside hotel. He sate next to a gentleman named Perfect, a worthy good man, but not a wise one, and withal a bore of the first magnitude. "Ass in presenti Perfectum format," was his murmured comment to me as he passed out to his post-prandial cigar. You provoked that Parthian shot, my St John! Light up—let not your angry passions rise. We shall have time for a quiet whiff before they come.

*St J.* They? who? what others? do we look for more?

*Pley.* Of course. You don't suppose I am going to play "Dumby" with you two, do you? [*Violent agitation of knocker and door-bell. Mrs JINKWATER ushers in RUFFINGTON of 22 King's Bench Walks, barrister of twenty years' briefless standing, in a velvetene shooting-coat and wide-awake hat, and FYENESSE, a middle-aged lingering representative of decaying special-pleaderism, from the ground-floor, in dressing-gown and slippers.*]

*Ruff.* Who's here? I can't see through the smoke. What a devil of a stink!

*Ray.* Od's fires and frying-pans! but this is from bad to worse. Has Belgravia delivered us from the supercilious sarcasm of an Albany, only to plague us sorer with the Bohemian insolence of a——

*Ruff.* A Ruffington, I suppose. Out with it, man! I am a worm already crushed and have no strength to turn. Who's Albany? the "swell" we met shivering on the stairs?

*St J.* That was the fiend this fume did exorcise!

*Ruff.* No wonder! Tobias's diabolifuge was a fool to it! I too could wish myself in "the utmost parts of Egypt!"

*Fye.* Poor devil! I could not but find in my heart to pity the paulo-post-future of his boots. The floodgates of all Olympus are open! the bottom of Jupiter's sieve is washed clean out! and there is not a disengaged cab between St Dunstan's and Charing Cross!



*Alb.* So much the better ! He'll be too sloppy to "show," and Darwin miss a cogent present argument of his doctrine.

*St J.* Alas, the foul ingratitude of man ! You, Ruffington, out of this very pouch, have begged or filched more pipefuls than——

*Ruff.* For the love of good honest prose, turn off that tap, and spare us ! *Peccavi !* I provoked it. I was ungrateful, cross, yea, savage. I am the very butt of all the arrows of outrageous fortune. Calamities—gregarious ever, curse them !—have to-night galloped rough-shod over this mangled and yet palpitating frame. My steak was tough—my flask of Gladstone was flat. My new umbrella—the envy of the street, the ornament of the "stand" in the Club, the *chef-d'œuvre* of Sangster's deftest artist—some scoundrel has carried it off—by mistake, of course—and I shall never see it more. I have been soaked to the core ! I have found my home desolate, my candlestick ungarnished, my coal-scuttle without a lump, my backy-box a vacuum ! Bear with me ! Comfort me ! In all penitence I crave of you, my St John, an alms of that very weed whose ambrosial savour I did but now, in the bitterness of my soul, unjustly vilipend ; and, Pleydell, for charity, play Titinius' part and minister to me a tumbler of something hot !

*Pley.* Anon, anon, sweet sufferer ! Cut in, you four, while I set forth the "materials." Fill the kettle, Mrs Jinkwater, and set it by the fire. And now, I no longer require your services. You are dismissed from this moment, Mrs J. !

*Mrs Jink.* Dismissed, Mr Pleydell, sir ? O Lord ! sir, whatever——

*Pley.* Be calm, too keenly apprehensive specimen of a too sensitive sex ! You may retire for the night, I mean. I shall breakfast in the morning at—whatever hour it pleases me to get up. William J. ! look in, with my respectful compliments, on the Attorney-General, if you can find him still in chambers, and beg him not to be distressed if I should chance to be late at consultation at 9 A.M. to-morrow.

*W. J. winks at his parent, and slams the outer door violently behind their joint exit. Commencement of serious business, and rapid development of the worst passions of human nature. Clouds of smoke—torrents of diluted alcohol—storms of untempered recrimination—revokes latent and patent—exultation, execration, disputation, humiliation, and reconciliation :—Hoyle set at defiance, and J. C. trampled under foot. Five consecutive "last" rubbers, two "very last" ditto, one more "to conclude ;" and exeunt omnes, all losers, at 1½ A.M.*

*Pley.* (*solus—with the stump of a cigar, and complacently jingling a handful of loose silver in the right-hand pocket of his nether integuments*).  
Laus Deo !

## ALICE LORRAINE.

## A TALE OF THE SOUTH DOWNS.

## PART III.—CHAPTER XIII.

HILARY LORRAINE enjoyed his sudden delivery from London, and the fresh delight of the dewy country, with such loud approval, and such noisy lightness of heart, that even Crusty John, perched high on the driving-box above him, could not help looking back now and then into the van, and affording the horses the benefit of his opinion. "A right down hearty one he be, as 'll make some of our maids look alive. And the worst time of year for such work too, when the May-Dukes is in, and the Hearts a colouring!"

Hilary was sitting on an empty "half-sieve," and with his usual affability enjoying the converse of "Paddy from Cork," as everybody called the old Irishman, who served alike for farm, road, or market, as the "lad of all work." But Gregory Lovejoy, being of a somewhat grave and silent order, was already beginning to doubt his own prudence in bringing their impulsive friend so near to a certain fair cousin of his now staying at the hospitable farm, in whom he felt a tender interest. Poor Lovejoy feared that his chance would be small against this dashing stranger; and he balanced uncomfortably in his mind, whether or not he should drop a hint, at the first opportunity, to Lorraine, concerning his views in that quarter. Often he almost resolved to do so; and then to his diffidence it seemed presumptuous to fancy that any young fellow of Hilary's birth and expectations would entangle himself in their rustic world.

At Bromley they pulled up, to

bait "man and beast," three fine horses, and four good men, eager to know the reason why they should not have their breakfast. Lorraine, although very short of cash (as he always found the means to be), demanded and stood out for leave to pay for everybody. This privilege was obtained at last—as it generally is by persistency—and after that it was felt that Hilary could no longer be denied his manifest right to drive the van. He had driven the Brighton four-horse coach, the whole way to London, times and again; and it was perfectly absurd to suppose that he could not manage three horses. Master John Shorne yielded his seat, apparently to this reasoning, but really to his own sure knowledge that the horses after so long a journey would be, on their way to stall, as quiet as lambs in the evening. Therefore he rolled himself up in the van, and slept the sleep of the man who has been up and wide-awake all night, for the sake of other people.

The horses well knew the true way home, and offered no cause for bit or whip; and they seemed to be taken sometimes with the pleasure which Hilary found in addressing them. They lifted their tails, and they pricked their ears, at the proper occasions genially; till the heat of the day settled down on their backs, and their creases grew dark and then lathery. And the horsefly (which generally forbears the pleasure of nuisance till July) in this unusually hot summer was earnest in his vocation already. Therefore, being of a leisurely mind, as behoves



all genuine sons of the soil, Master Shorne called a halt, through the blazing time of noon, before battling with the "Backbone of Kent," as the beautiful North Down range is called. Here in a secluded glen they shunned the heats of Canicula under the sign of the "Pig and Whistle."

Thus the afternoon was wearing when they came to Sevenoaks, and passing through that pleasant town, descended into the weald of Kent. No one but Hilary cared for the wonderful beauty and richness of the view, breadth upon breadth of fruitland, woven in and out with hops and corn; and towards the windings of the Medway, pastures of the deepest green, even now after the heat of the sun, and the thirst of the comet that drank the dew. Turning on the left from the Tonbridge road, they threaded their way along narrow lanes, where the hedges no longer were scarred with chalk, but tapestried with all shades of green, and even in the broken places, rich with little cascades of loam. Careless dog-rose played above them with its loose abandonment; and honeysuckle was almost ready to release its clustered tongues. But "Travellers' Joy"—the joy that makes all travellers long to rest in Kent—abode as yet in the hopeful bud, a pendent shower of emerald.

These things were not heeded much, but pleasantly accepted, by the four men and three horses. All felt alike that the world was made for them, and for them to enjoy themselves; and little they cared to go into the reason, when they had the room for it. With this large sense of what ought to be, they came to the gate of Old Applewood farm, a great white gate with a padlock on it. This stopped the road, and was meant to do so; for Martin Lovejoy, Gregory's father, claimed the soil of the road from this point, and

denied all right of way, public or even private, to all claimants of whatsoever kind. On the other hand the parish claimed it as a public thoroughfare, and two farmers further on vowed that it was an "occupation road;" and what was more, they would use it as such. "Grower Lovejoy," as the neighbourhood called him—not that he was likely to grow much more, but because of his cherry-orchards—here was the proper man to hold the gate against all his enemies. When they sawed it down, he very promptly replaced it with cast-iron; and when this was shattered with a fold-pitcher, he stopped their premature triumph by a massive barrier of wrought metal case-hardened against rasp or cold chisel. Moreover he painted it white, so that any nocturnal attack might be detected at a greater distance.

When Paddy had opened this gate with a key which he had carried to London, they passed through an orchard of May-Duke cherries, with the ripe fruit hanging quite over the road. "No wonder you lock the gate," said Lorraine, as Crusty John, now on the box again, handed him a noble cluster, with the dark juice mantling richly under the ruddy gloss of skin.

"Do you mean that we should get them stolen?" Gregory asked, with some indignation; for his Kentish pride was touched: "oh, no, we should never get them stolen. Nobody about here would do such a thing."

"Then they don't know what's good," answered Hilary, jumping at another cluster; "I was born to teach the Kentish public the proper way to steal cherries."

"Well, they do take them sometimes," the truthful Gregory confessed; "but we never call it stealing, any more than we do what the birds take."

"Valued fellow-student, thy strong point will not be the criminal law. But you must have a criminal love of the law, to jump at it out of these cherry-trees."

"It was my mother's work, as you know. Ah, there she is, and my cousin Phyllis!"

For the moment Lovejoy forgot his duty to his friend and particular guest, and slipping down from the tail of the van, made off at full speed through the cherry-trees. Hilary scarcely knew what to do. The last thing that ever occurred to him was that any one had been rude to him; still it was rather unpleasant to drive, or be driven, up to the door of his host, sitting upon a bushel-basket, and with no one to say who he was. Yet to jump out and run after Gregory, and collar him while he saluted his mother, was even a worse alternative. In a very few moments that chance was gone; for the team, with the scent of their corn so nigh, broke into a merry canter, and rattled along with their ears pricked forward, and a pleasant jingling. Neither did they stop until they turned into a large farmyard, with an oast-house at the further end of it. The dwelling-house was of the oldest fashion, thatched in the middle, at each end gabled, tiled in some places, and at some parts slabbed. Yet, on the whole, it looked snug, dry, and happy. Here, with one accord, they halted, and shook themselves in their harness, and answered the neighs of their friends in the stables.

Hilary, laughing at his own plight, but feeling uncommonly stiff in the knees, arose from his basket, and looked around; and almost the first thing that met his gaze destroyed all his usual presence of mind. This was a glance of deep surprise, mingled with timid inquiry and doubt, from what Master Hilary

felt at once to be the loveliest, sweetest, and most expressive brown eyes in the universe. The young girl blushed as she turned away, through fear of having shown curiosity; but the rich tint of her cheeks was faint, compared with the colour of poor Lorraine's. That gay youth was taken aback so utterly by the flash of a moment that he could not find a word to say, but made pretence in a wholesale manner to see nothing at all particular. But the warm blood from his heart belied him, which he turned away to hide, and worked among the baskets briskly, hoping to be looked at, and preparing to have another look as soon as he felt that it could be done.

Meanwhile, that formidable creature, whose glance had produced such a fine effect, recovered more promptly from surprise, and felt perhaps the natural pride of success, and desire to pursue the fugitive. At any rate, she was quite ready to hear whatever he might have to say for himself.

"I must ask you to forgive me," Lorraine began in a nervous manner, lifting his hat, and still blushing freely, "for springing so suddenly out of the earth—or rather, out of this van, I mean; though that can't be right, for I still am in it. I believe that I have the pleasure of speaking to Miss Phyllis Clitherow. Your cousin, Mr Lovejoy, is a very great friend of mine indeed; and he most kindly asked, or rather, what I mean to say is, invited me to come down for a day or two to this delightful part of the world; and I have enjoyed it so much already, that I am sure—that—that in fact——"

"That I hope you may soon enjoy it more." She did not in the least mean any sarcasm or allusion to Hilary's present state; still he fancied that she did; until the kind



look, coming so sweetly from the kind warm heart, convinced him that she never could be so cruel.

"I see the most delightful prospect I ever could imagine of enjoying myself," Lorraine replied, with a glance, imparting to his harmless words the mischief of that which nowadays we call "a most unwarrantable personal allusion." But she did not, or would not, take it so.

"How kind of you to be pleased so lightly! But we do our best, in our simple way, when any one kindly comes to see us."

"Why, Miss Clitherow, I thought from what your cousin said to me that you were only staying here for a little time yourself."

"You are quite right as to Miss Clitherow. But I am not my cousin Phyllis. I am only Mabel Lovejoy, Gregory Lovejoy's sister."

"By Jove, how glad I am!" cried Hilary, in his impetuous way; "what a fool I must have been not to know it, after I saw him run to meet his cousin in the orchard! But that treacherous Gregory never told me that he even had a sister. Now, won't I thoroughly give it to him?"

"You must not be angry, Mr Lorraine, with poor Gregory, because—because Phyllis is such a beautiful girl."

"Don't let me hear about beautiful girls! As if—as if there could be any——"

"Good enough for Gregory," she answered, coming cleverly to his rescue, for he knew that he had gone too far; "but wait till you have seen cousin Phyllis."

"There is one thing I shall not defer for the glory of seeing a thousand Miss Clitherows, and that is the right that I have to shake hands with my dear friend Gregory's sister."

He had leaped from the van some time ago, and now held out

his hand (a good strong one, pleasingly veined with cherry-juice), and she, with hospitable readiness, laid her pretty palm therein. He felt that it was a pretty hand, and a soft one, and a hearty one; and he found excuse to hold it longer, while he asked a question.

"Now, how did you know my name, if you please, while I made such a stupid mistake about yours?"

"By your bright blue eyes," she was going to answer, with her native truthfulness; but the gaze of those eyes suggested that the downright truth might be dangerous. Therefore, for once, she met a question with a question warily.

"Was it likely that I should not know you, after all I have heard of you?" This pleased him well in a general way. For Hilary, though too free (if possible) from conceit and arrogance, had his own little share of vanity. Therefore, upon the whole, it was lucky, and showed due attention to his business, that Grower Lovejoy now came up, to know what was doing about the van.

Martin Lovejoy was not a squatter, by seven years stamped into "tenant right," which means for the most part landlord's wrong. Nor was he one of those great tenant farmers who, even then, were beginning to rise, and hold their own with "landed gentry." His farm was small, when compared with some; but it was outright his own, having descended to him through long-buried generations. So that he was one of the ever-dwindling class of "franklins," a class that has done good work for England, neither obtaining nor wanting thanks.

Old Applewood farm contained altogether about six hundred acres, whereof at least two-thirds lay sweetly in the Vale of Medway, and could show root, stem, or bine against any other land in Kent, and

therefore any in England. Here was no fear of the heat of the sun, or the furious winter's rages, such a depth of nature underlay the roots of everything. Nothing ever suffered from that poverty of blood which makes trees canker on a shallow soil; and no tree rushed into watery strength (which very soon turns to weakness), through having laid hold upon something that suited only a particular part of it.

And not the trees alone, but all things, grew within that proper usage of a regulated power (yet with more of strength to come up, if it should be called for), which has made our land and country fertile over all the world; receiving submissively the manners and the manure of all nations. This is a thing to be proud of; but the opportunity for such pride was not open to the British mind at the poor old time we deal with.

Martin Lovejoy knew no more than that the rest of Europe was amassed against our island; and if England meant to be England, every son of that old country must either fight himself or pay. Martin would rather have fought than paid, if he had only happened to be a score and a half years younger.

Hilary Lorraine knew well (when Martin Lovejoy took his hand, and welcomed him to Old Applewood) that here was a man to be relied on, to make good his words and mind. A man of moderate stature, but of sturdy frame, and some dignity; ready to meet everybody pretty much as he was met.

"Glad to see you, sir," he said; "I have often heard of you, Master Lorraine; it is right kind of you to come down. I hope that you are really hungry, sir."

"To the last degree," answered

Hilary; "I have been eating off and on, but nothing at all to speak of, in the noble air I have travelled through."

"Our air has suited you, I see by the colour of your cheeks and eyes. Aha! the difference begins, as I have seen some scores of times, at ten miles out of London. And we are nearly thirty here, sir, from that miserable place. Excuse me, Master Lorraine, I hope I say nothing to offend you."

"My dear sir, how can you offend me? I hate London heartily. There must be a million people there a great deal too good to live in it. We are counting everybody this year; and I hear that when it is made up there will be a million and a quarter!"

"I can't believe it. I cannot believe it. There never was such a deal before. And how can there want to be so many now? This numbering of the people is an unholy thing, that leads to plagues. All the parsons around here say that this has brought the comet. And they may show something for it; and they preach of Jerusalem when it was going to be destroyed. They have frightened all our young maids terribly. What is said in London, sir?"

"Scarcely anything, Mr Lovejoy: scarcely anything at all. We only see him every now and then, because of the smoke between us. And when we see him, we have always got our own work to attend to."

"Wonderful, wonderful!" answered the Grower; "who can make out them Londoners? About their business they would go if Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were all swallowed up in front of them. For that I like them. I like a man—but come in to our little supper, sir."



## CHAPTER XIV.

The next day was Sunday; and Hilary (having brought a small bag of clothes with him) spent a good deal of the early time in attending to his adornment. For this he had many good reasons to give, if only he had thought about them; but the only self-examination that occurred to him was at the looking-glass. Here he beheld himself looking clean and bright, as he always did look; and yet he was not quite satisfied (as he ought to have been) with his countenance. "There is room for a lot of improvement," he exclaimed at himself, quite bitterly: "how coarse, and how low, I begin to look! But there is not a line in her face that could be changed without spoiling it. There again! Hairs, hairs, coming almost everywhere! Beautiful girls have none of that stuff. How they must despise us! All their hair is ornamental, and ours comes so disgracefully!"

When he had no one else to talk to, Hilary always talked to himself. He always believed that he knew himself better than anybody else could know him. And so he had a right to do; and so he must have done just now, if doubtful watch of himself and great shaking of his head could help him.

At last he began to be fit to go down, according to his own ideas, though not at all sure that he might not have managed to touch himself up just a little bit more—which might make all the difference. He thought that he looked pretty well; but still he would have liked to ask Gregory before it was too late to make any change, and the beautiful eyes fell upon him. But Gregory, and all the rest, were waiting for him in the breakfast-room; and no one allowed

him to suspect how much he had tried their patience.

Young Lovejoy showed a great deal of skill in keeping Lorraine to the other side of the table from Phyllis Clitherow; and Hilary was well content to sit at the side of Mabel. Phyllis, in his opinion, was a beautiful girl enough, and clever in her way, and lively; but lovely was the only word to be used at all about Mabel. And she asked him to have just a spoonful of honey, and to share a pat of butter with her, in such a voice, and with such a look, that if she had said, "here are two oz. of cold-drawn castor oil—if you take one, I'll take the other," he must have opened his mouth for it.

So they went on; and neither knew the deadly sin they were dropping to—that deadly sin of loving when the level and entire landscape of two lives are different.

Through the rich fields, and across a pretty little wandering brook, which had no right to make a quarter of the noise it was making, this snug party went to church. Accurate knowledge of what to do, as well as very pretty manners, and a sound resolve to be over-nice (rather than incur the possibility of pushing), led the two young men from London rather to underdo the stiles, and almost go quite away, than to express their feelings by hands, whenever the top-bar made a tangle, according to the usual knot of it. The two girls entered into this, and said to themselves, what a very superior thing it was to have young men from London in comparison with young hop-growers, who stood here and there across them, and made them so blush for each inch of their legs. What made it all the more delicate, and ever so much

more delightful, was, that the excellent Grower was out of the way, and so was Mrs Lovejoy. For the latter, being a most kind-hearted woman, had rheumatic pains at the first church-bell, all up the leaders of her back; so that the stiles were too many for her, and Master Lovejoy was compelled to drive her in the one-horse shay.

By the time these staid young men and maidens came to the little churchyard gate everything was settled between them, as if by deed under hand and seal, although not so much as a wave of the air, much less any positive whisper of the wind, had stirred therein. The import of this unspoken and even undreamed covenant was, that Gregory now must walk with Phyllis, and see to her, and look at her, without her having any second thoughts concerning Hilary. Hilary, on the other hand, was to be acknowledged as the cavalier of Mabel; to help her when she wanted helping, and to talk when she wanted talking; although it might be assumed quite fairly that she could do most of that for herself. Feeling the strength of good management, all of them marched into church accordingly.

In the very same manner they all marched out, after behaving uncommonly well, and scarcely glancing at one another, when the clergyman gave out that the heat of the weather had not allowed him to write a new discourse that week; but as the same cause must have made them forgetful of what he had said last Sunday (when many of them seemed inattentive), he now proposed, with the Divine assistance, to read the same sermon again to them.

With the unconverted youthful mind, a spring (like that of Jack-out-of-the-box) at the outer door of the church jumps up, after being so long inside, into that liberal good-

will, which is one of our noblest sentiments. Anybody is glad to see almost everybody; and people (though of one parish) in great joy forego their jangling. The sense of a grand relief, and a conscience wiped clean for another week, leads the whole lot to love one another as far as the gate of the churchyard.

But our young people were much inclined to love one another much further. The more they got into the meadow-land, and the strength of the summer around them, with the sharp stroke of the sun, and the brisk short shadows of one another, the more they were treading a dangerous path, and melting away to each other. Hilary saw with romantic pride that Mabel went on as well as ever, and had not a bead on her clear bright cheeks; while at the same time Phyllis, though stopping to rest every now and then—but Hilary never should have noticed this. Such things are below contempt.

In this old and genial house, the law was that the guest should appoint the time for dinner, whenever the cares of the outer work permitted it. And as there were no such cares on Sunday, Hilary had to choose the time for the greatest event of the human day. This had been talked of and settled, of course, before anybody got the prayer-books; and now the result at two o'clock was a highly excellent repast. To escape the power of the sun they observed this festival in the hall of the house, which was deliciously cool even now, being paved with stone, and shaded by a noble and fragrant walnut-tree. Mrs Lovejoy knew, what many even good housekeepers seem not to know—to wit that, to keep a room cool, it is not necessary to open the windows when the meridian sun bombards. "For goodness' sake, let us have some air in



such weather as this!" they cry, when they might as well say, "let us cool the kitchen by opening the door of the oven."

Lorraine was one of those clever fellows who make the best of everything; which is the cleverest thing that can be done by a human being. And he was not yet come to the time of life when nothing is good if the dinner is bad; so that he sat down cheerily, and cheered all the rest by doing so.

Of course there were many things said and done, which never would have been said, or thought of, at the dinner-table of Coombe Lorraine. But Hilary (though of a very sensitive fibre in such matters) neither saw, nor heard, nor felt, a single thing that irked him. There was nothing low about anybody; whereas there was something as high as the heavens dining out of the very next plate. He made himself (to the very utmost of his power) agreeable, except at the moments when his power of pleasing quite outran himself. Then he would stop and look at his fork—one of the fine old two-pronged fellows—and almost be afraid to glance, to ask what she was thinking.

She was thinking the very things that she should have known better than to think. But what harm could there possibly be in scarcely thinking, so much as dreaming, things that could have nothing in them? Who was she, a country-girl, to set herself up, and behave herself, as if anybody meant anything? And yet his eyes, and the bend of his head, and his choice of that kidney-potato for her (as if he were born a grower)—and then the way he poured her beer—if there was nothing in all this, why then there was nothing in all the world, except delusion and breaking of heart.

Hilary, sitting at her knife-hand,

felt a whole course of the like emotions, making allowance for gender. How beautifully she played her knife, with a feminine tenderness not to make too strong a slice of anything! And how round her little wrist was, popping in and out of sleeves, according as the elbow went; and no knob anywhere to be seen, such as women even of the very latest fashion have. And then her hair was coming towards him (when she got a bit of gristle) so that he could take a handful, if the other people only would have the manners not to look. And oh, what lovely hair it was! so silky, and so rich, and bright, and full of merry dances to the music of her laugh! And he did not think he had ever seen anything better than her style of eating, without showing it. Clearly enjoying her bit of food, and tempting all to feed their best; yet full of mind at every mouthful, and of heart at every help. But above all, when she looked up, quite forgetting both knife and fork, and looked as if she could look like that into no other eyes but his; with such a gentle flutter, and a timid wish to tell no more, and yet a sudden pulse of glad light from the innocent young heart—nothing could be lovelier than the way in which she raised her eyes, except her way of dropping them.

These precious glances grew more rare and brief the more he sought for them; and he wondered whether anybody else ever had been treated so. Then, when he would seem to be doubtful, and too much inclined to stop, a look of surprise, or a turn of the head, would tempt him to go on again. And there would be little moments (both on his side and on hers) of looking about at other people with a stealthy richness. With a sense of some great treasure, made between

them, and belonging to themselves in private ; a proud demand that the rest of the world should attend to its proper business ; and then, with one accord, a meeting of the eyes that were beginning, more and more, to mean alike.

All this was as nice as could be, and a pretty thing to see. Still, in a world that always leaves its loftiest principles to accumulate, at the lowest interest (and once in every generation to be a mere drug in the market), "love" is used, not in games alone, as the briefest form of

"nothing." All our lovers (bred as lovers must be under school boards) know what they are after now, and who can pay the ninepence. But in the ancient time, the mothers had to see to most of that.

Mrs Lovejoy, though she did not speak, or look particularly, had her perception of what was going on close by. And she said to herself, "I will see to this. It is no good interfering now. I shall have Miss Mabel all to myself in three-quarters of an hour."

#### CHAPTER XV.

Mrs Lovejoy's lecture to her daughter seemed likely to come just a little too late, as so many excellent lessons do. For as soon as he saw that all had dined, the host proposed an adjournment, which was welcomed with no small delight by all except the hostess.

"Now, Master Lorraine, and my niece Phyllis, what say you, if we gather our fruit for ourselves in the shady places ; or rather, if we sit on the bank of the little brook in the orchard, where there is a nice sheltered spot ; and there we can have a glass of wine while the maidens pick the fruit for us?"

"Capital," answered Hilary ; "what a fine idea, Mr Lovejoy ! But surely we ought to pick for the ladies, instead of letting them pick for us."

"No, sir, we will let them have the pleasure of waiting upon us. It is the rule of this neighbourhood, and ought to be observed everywhere. We work for the ladies all the week, serve, honour, and obey them. On Sundays they do the like for us, and it is a very pleasant change. Mabel, don't forget the pipes. Do you smoke, Master Lorraine ? If so, my daughter will fill a pipe for you."

"That would be enough to tempt me, even if I disliked it, whereas I am very fond of it. However, I never do smoke, because my father has a most inveterate prejudice against it. I promised him some time ago to give it up for a twelve-month. And the beauty of it is that there is nothing he himself enjoys so much as a good pinch of snuff. Ah, there I am getting my revenge upon him. My sister will do anything I ask her ; and he will do anything she asks him : and so, without his knowledge, I am breaking him of his snuff-box."

"Aha, well done ! I like that. And I like you too, young man, for your obedience to your father. That virtue is becoming very rare ; rarer and rarer every year. Why, if my father had knocked me down I should have lain on the ground, if it was a nettle-bed, till he told me to get up. Now, Greg, my boy, what would you do ?"

"Well, sir, I think that I should get up as quick as I could, and tell my mother."

"Aha ! and I should have the nettles then. Well said, Greg, my boy ; I believe it is what all the young fellows nowadays would do. But I



don't mean you, of course, Master Lorraine. Come along, come along. Mabel, you know where that old Madeira is that your poor Uncle Ambrose took three times to Calcutta. Ah, poor man, I wish he was here! As fine a fellow as ever shotted a cannon at a Frenchman. Nelson could have done no better. And it did seem uncommonly hard upon him never to go to Churchyard. However, the will of the Lord be done! Now mind, the new patent cork-screw."

Mabel was only too glad to get this errand to the cellar. With filial instinct she perceived how likely she was to "catch it," as soon as her mother got the chance. Not that she deserved it. Oh no, not in the least, her conscience told her. Was she to be actually rude to her father's guest, and her brother's friend? And as if she was not old enough now, at eighteen and a quarter, to judge for herself in such childish matters as how to behave at dinner-time!

By the side of a pebbly brook—which ran within stone-throw of the house, sparkling fresh and abundant from deep well-springs of the hill-range—they came to a place which seemed to be made especially for enjoyment. A bend of the grassy banks and rounded hollow of the fruit-land, where cherry, and apple, and willow-tree clubbed their hospitable shade, and fugitive water made much ado to ripple down the zigzag rill. Here in cool and gentle shelter, the Grower set his four legs down; *i.e.*, the four legs of his chair, because, like all that in gardens dwell, he found mother earth too rheumatic for him, especially in hot weather when deep sluggish fibres radiate. The Groweress also had her chair, borne by the sedulous Gregory. All the rest, like nymphs and shepherds, strewed their recumbent forms on turf.

"God Almighty," said Master Lovejoy, fearing that he might be taking it too easy for the Sabbath-day, "really hath made beautiful things for us His creatures to rejoice in, with praise, thanksgiving, and fruitfulness. Mabel, put them two bottles in the brook—not there, you stupid child; can't you see that the sun comes under that old root? In the corner where that shelf of stone is. Thank you, Master Lorraine. What a thing it is to have a headpiece! But God Almighty never made, among all His wonderful infinite works, the waters and the greatwhales, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself, and the green herb for meat, which means to come to table with the meat; His mercy endureth for ever; and He never showed it as when He made tobacco, and clay for tobacco-pipes—the white clay that He made man of." With this thanksgiving he began to smoke.

"Now, Martin, I never could see that," answered Mrs Lovejoy; "the best and greatest work of the Lord ought to have been for the women first."

"Good wife, then it must have been the apple. Ah, Gregory, I had your mother there. However, we won't dispute on a Sunday; it spoils all the goodness of going to church, and never leaves anything settled. Mabel, run away now for the fruit, while Gregory feels if the wine is cold. Master Lorraine, I hope that our little way of going on, and being over free on a Sunday perhaps, does not come amiss to you."

Hilary did not look as if anything came amiss to him, as now he lay at the feet of Mabel, on the slope of the sweet rich sward, listening only for her voice, more liquid than even the tone of the brook. He listened for it, but not to it; inasmuch as one of those sudden changes, which (at less than half a breath)

vapour the glass of the feminine mind, was having its turn with the maiden. Mabel felt that she had not kept herself to herself, as she should have done. Who was this gentleman, or what, that she should be taken with him so suddenly as to feel her breath come short, every time that she even thought of her mother? A gentleman from London too, where the whole time of the Court was spent, as Master Shorne brought news every week, in things that only the married women were allowed to hear of. In the present case, of course, she knew how utterly different all things were. How lofty and how grand of heart, how fearful even to look at her much—still, for all that, it would only be wise to show him, or at least to let him see that—that at any rate, for the present——

“Now, Mabel, when are you going for the cherries? Phyllis—bless my heart alive! Gregory, are you gone to sleep? What are all the young people made of, when a touch of summer makes them only fit to sprawl about?”

“Bring three sorts of cherries, Mabel,” Gregory shouted after her; “Mr Lorraine must be tired of May-Dukes I am sure. The Black Geans must be ripe, and the Eltons, and the Early Amber. And go and see how the White-hearts are on the old tree against the wall.”

“Much he knows about cherries, I believe!” grumbled Mr Lovejoy; “John Doe and Richard Roe be more to his liking than the finest Griffins. Why, the White-hearts haven’t done stoning yet! What can the boy be thinking of?” It was the Grower’s leading grievance that neither of his two sons seemed likely to take to the business after him. Here was the elder being turned by his mother into a “thieves’ counsellor,” and the younger was away at sea, and whenever he came

home told stories of foreign fruit which drove his father into a perfect fury. So that now it was Martin’s leading wish to marry his only daughter to some one fitted to succeed him, who might rent the estate from the proper heir, for the land had been disavagelled.

It is a pleasing thing to a young man—ay, and an old one may be pleased—to see a pretty girl make herself useful in pretty and natural attitudes; and that pleasure now might be enjoyed at leisure and in duplicate. For Phyllis Clitherow was a pretty, or rather a beautiful young woman, slender, tall, and fair of hue. Not to be compared with Mabel, according to Hilary’s judgment; but infinitely superior to her in the opinion of Gregory. All that depends upon taste, of course; but Mabel’s beauty was more likely to outlast the flush of youth, having the keeping qualities of a bright and sweet expression, and the dark lustre of sensible eyes.

These two went among the cherry-trees, with fair knowledge what to do, and having light scarves on their heads, brought behind their ears and tied under the curves of their single chins. Because they knew that the spurs and sprays would spoil their lovely Sunday hats, even if they should escape the drip of a cherry wounded by some fine thrush. The blackbirds pop them off entire, and so do the starlings; but the thrushes sit and peck at them, with the juice dripping down on their dappled breasts, and a flavour in their throats which they mean to sing about at their leisure. But now the birds that were come among them meant to have them wholesale. Phyllis, being a trifle taller, and less deft of finger, bent the shady branches down for Mabel to pluck the fruit. Mabel knew that she must take the northern side of



the tree, of course ; and the boughs where the hot sun had not beaten through the leaves and warmed the fruit. Also she knew that she must not touch the fruit with her hand and dim the gloss ; but above all things to be careful—as of the goose with the golden eggs—to make no havoc of the young buds forming, at the base of every cluster, for the promise of next year's crop.

Hilary longed to go and help them ; but his host being very proud of the grandeur of his Madeira wine, would not even hear of it. And Mrs Lovejoy, for other reasons, showed much skill in holding him ; so that he could but sit down and admire the picture he longed to be part of. Hence he beheld in the happy distance, in and out the well-fed trees, skill, and grace, and sprightly movements, tiny baskets lifted high, round arms bent for drawing downward, or thrown up for a jumping catch, and everything else that is so lovely, and safe to admire at a distance.

By-and-by the maids came back, bearing their juicy treasure, and blithe with some sage mysticism of laughter. They had hit upon some joke between them, or something that chanced to tickle them ; and when this happens with girls, they never seem to know when the humour is out of it. And of course they make the deepest mystery of a diminutive jest so harmless, that it hits no one except themselves. Mrs Lovejoy looked at them strongly. Her time for common-sense was come ; and she thought they were stealing a march upon her, by some whispers about young men, the last thing they should ever think of.

Whereas the poor girls had no thought of anything of the kind. Neither would they think one atom more than they could help, of what did not in the least concern them ; if their elders, who laid down the

law, would only leave them to themselves. And it was not long till this delightful discretion was afforded them. For, after a glass or two of wine, the heat of the day began to tell, through the cool air of the hollow, on that worthy couple, now kindly hand in hand, and calmly going down the slope of life. They hoped they had got a long way to go yet ; and each thought so of the other. Neither of them had much age, being well under three-score years ; just old enough to begin to look on the generation judiciously. But having attained this right at last, after paying heavily, what good could they have of it, if young people were ever so far above their judgment ? Meditating thus they dozed, and youthful voice, and glance, and smile, were drowned in the melody of—nose.

The breeze that comes in the afternoon of every hot day (unless the sky is hushing up for a thunder-storm) began to show the underside of leaves and the upper gloss of grass, and with feeble puffs to stir the stagnant heat into vibration, like a candle quivering. Every breath at first was hot, and only made the air feel hotter, until there arrived a refreshing current, whether from some water-meadows or the hills where the chalk lay cool.

"The heat is gone," said Martin Lovejoy, waking into the pleasant change ; "it will be a glorious afternoon. Pooh, what is this to call hot weather ? Only three years ago, in 1808, I remember well——"

"It may have been hotter then, my dear," said Mrs Lovejoy, placidly ; "but it did not make you forget your pipe, and be ungrateful to Providence about me."

"Why, where can the children be ?" cried the Grower : "I thought they were all here just this moment ! It is wonderful how they get away together. I thought young Lorraine

and Gregory were as fast asleep as you or I! Oh, there I hear them in the distance, with the girls, no doubt, all alive and merry!"

"Ay, and a little too merry, I doubt," answered Mrs Lovejoy; "a little too much alive for me. Why, they must be in the wall garden now! Goodness, alive, I believe they are, and nobody to look after them!"

"Well, if they are they can't do much harm. They are welcome to anything they can find, except the six strawberries I crossed, and Mabel will see that they don't eat those."

"Crossed strawberries, indeed now, Martin!" Mrs Lovejoy never could be brought to understand cross-breeding; "they'll do something worse than cross your strawberries unless you keep a little sharper look-out. They'll cross your plans, Master Martin Lovejoy, and it's bad luck for any one who does that."

"I don't understand you, wife, any more than you understand the strawberries. How could they cross them at this time of year?"

"Why, don't you see that this gay young Lorraine is falling over head and ears in love with our darling Mabel?"

"Whew! That would be a sad affair," the Grower answered carelessly: "I like the young fellow, and should be sorry to have him so disappointed. For of course he never could have our Mab unless he made up his mind to turn grower. Shorne says that he is a born salesman; perhaps he is also a born grower."

"Now, husband, why do you vex me so? You know as well as I do that he is the only son of a baronet, belonging, as Gregory says, to one of the proudest families in England; though he doesn't show much pride himself, that's certain. Is it likely they would let him have Mabel?"

"Is it likely that we would let

Mabel have him? But this is all nonsense, wife; you are always discovering such mare's-nests. Tush! why, I didn't fall in love with you till we fell off a horse three times together."

"I know that, of course. But that was because they wanted us to do it. The very thing is that it happens at once when everybody's face is against it. However, you've had your warning, Martin, and you only laugh at it. You have nobody but yourself to thank if it goes against your plots and plans. For my own part, I should be well pleased if Mabel were really fond of him, and if the great people came round in the end, as sooner or later they always do. There are very few families in the kingdom that need be ashamed of my daughter, I think. And he is a most highly accomplished young man. He said last night immediately after prayer-time that I might try for an hour and he would be most happy to listen to me, but I never, never could persuade him that I was over forty years old. Therefore, husband, see to it yourself. Things may take their own course for me."

"Trust me, trust me, good wife," said Martin; "I can see, as far as most folk can. What stupes boys and girls are, to be sure, to go rushing about after watery fruit, and leave such wine as this here Madeira. Have another glass, my dear good creature, to cheer you up after your prophecies."

Meanwhile, in the large old-fashioned garden, which lay at the east end of the house, further up the course of the brook, any one sitting among the currant-bushes might have judged which of the two was right, the unromantic franklin, or his more ambitious but sensible wife. Gregory and Phyllis were sitting quietly in a fine old arbour, having a steady little flirt of their



own, and attending to nothing in the world besides. Phyllis was often of a pensive cast, and she never looked better than in this mood, when she felt the deepest need of sympathy. This she was receiving now, and pretending of course not to care for it; her fingers played with moss and bark, the fruits of the earth were below her contempt, and she looked too divine for anybody.

On the other hand, the rarest work and the most tantalising tricks were going on at a proper distance between young Mabel and Hilary. They had straggled off into the strawberry-beds where nobody could see them, and there they seemed likely to spend some hours if nobody should come after them. The plants were of the true Carolina, otherwise called the "old scarlet pine," which among all our countless new sorts finds no superior, perhaps no equal, although it is now quite out of vogue, because it fruits so shyly?

What says our chief authority? "Fruit medium-sized, ovate, even, and regular, and with a glossy neck, skin deep red, flesh pale red, very firm and solid, with a fine sprightly and very rich pine flavour." What lovelier fruit could a youth desire to place between little pearly teeth, reserving the right to have a bite, if any of the very firm flesh should be left? What fruit more suggestive of elegant compliments could a maid open her lips to receive, with a dimple in each mantled cheek—lips more bright than the skin of the fruit, cheeks by no means of a pale red now, although very firm and solid—and as for the sprightly flavour of the whole, it may be imagined, if you please, but is not to be ascertained as yet?

"Now, I must pick a few for you, Mr Lorraine. You are really giving me all you find. And they are so scarce—no, thank you; I can get up

very nicely by myself. And there can't be any brier in my hair. You really do imagine things. Where on earth could it have come from? Well, if you are sure, of course you may remove it. Now I verily believe you put it there. Well, perhaps I am wronging you. It was an unfair thing to say, I confess. Now wait a moment, while I run to get a little cabbage-leaf!"

"A cabbage-leaf! Now you are too bad. I won't taste so much as the tip of a strawberry out of anything but one. How did you eat your strawberries, pray?"

"With my mouth, of course. But explain your meaning. You won't eat what I pick for you out of what?"

"Out of anything else in the world except your own little beautiful palm."

"Now, how very absurd you are! Why, my hands are quite hot."

"Let me feel them and judge for myself. Now the other, if you please. Oh, how lovely and cool they are! How could you tell me such a story, Mabel, beautiful Mabel?"

"I am not at all beautiful, and I won't be called so. And I know not what they may do in London. But I really think, considering—at least when one comes to consider that——"

"To consider what? You make me tremble, you do look so ferocious. Ah, I thought you couldn't do it long. Inconsiderate creature, what is it I am to consider?"

"You cannot consider! Well, then, remember. Remember it is not twenty-four hours since you saw me for the very first time, and surely it is not right and proper that you should begin to call me 'Mabel,' as if you had known me all your life!"

"I must have known you all my life. And I mean to know you all the rest of my life, and a great deal more than that——"

"It may be because you are Gregory's friend you are allowed to do things. But what would you think of me, Mr Lorraine, if I were to call you 'Hilary'—a thing I should never dream of?"

"I should think that you were the very kindest darling, and I should ask you to breathe it quite into my ear—'Hilary, Hilary!'—just like that; and then I should answer just like this, 'Mabel, Mabel, sweetest Mabel, how I love you, Mabel!' and then what would you say, if you please?"

"I should have to ask my mother," said the maiden, "what I ought to say. But luckily the whole of this is in your imagination. Mr Lorraine, you have lost your strawberries by your imagination."

"What do I care for strawberries?" Hilary cried, as the quick girl wisely beat a swift retreat from him. "You never can enter into my feelings, or you never would run away like that. And I can't run after you,

you know, because of Phyllis and Gregory. There she goes, and she won't come back. What a fool I was to be in such a hurry! But what could I do to help it? I never know where I am when she turns those deep rich eyes upon me. She never will show them again, I suppose, but keep the black lashes over them. And I was getting on so well—and here are the stalks of the strawberries!"

Of every strawberry she had eaten from his daring fingers he had kept the stalks and calyx, breathed on by her freshly fragrant breath, and slyly laid them in his pocket; and now he fell to at kissing them. Then he lay down in the Carolinas, where herskirt had moved theleaves, and to him, weary with strong heat, and a rush of new emotions, comfort came in the form of sleep. And when he awoke, in his open palm most delicately laid he found a little shell-shaped cabbage-leaf piled with the fruit of the glossy neck.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

These doings of Hilary and his love—for his love he declared her to be for ever, whether she would have him for hers or not—seem to have taken more time almost in telling than in befalling. Although it had been a long summer's day, to them it had passed as a rapid dream. So at least they fancied, when they began to look quietly back at it, forgetting the tale of the golden steps so lightly flitted over by the winged feet of love.

Martin Lovejoy watched his daughter at supper-time that Sunday; and he felt quite sure that his wife was wrong. Why, the girl scarcely spoke to Lorraine at all, and even neglected his plate so sadly, that her mother was compelled to remind her sharply of her duties. Upon which the Grower despatched

to his wife a smile of extreme sagacity, which (being fetched out of cipher and shorthand, by the matrimonial key) contained all this,—  
"Well, you are a silly, as you always are when you want to advise me. The girl is cold-shouldering that young fellow, the same as she does all the young hop-growers. And well she knows how to do it too. She gets her intellect from her father. Now please not to put in your oar, Mrs Lovejoy, another time, till it is asked for."

Moreover, he thought that if Mabel took the smallest delight in Hilary, she could not have answered as she had done, when that pious youth, in the early evening, expressed his sincere desire to attend another performance of Divine service.



"I had no idea," said the simple Gregory, "that you made a point of going to church at least twice every Sunday. I seldom see you of a Sunday in London. But the very last place I should go to, to find you, would probably be the Temple church."

"That is quite a different thing, don't you see? A country church, and a church in London, are as different as a meadow and a market-place."

"But surely, Mr Lorraine, you would find the duty of attending just the same." Thus spoke Mrs Lovejoy, who seldom missed a chance of discharging her duty towards young people.

"Quite so, of course I do, Mrs Lovejoy. But then we always perform our duties best when they are pleasures. And besides that, I have a special reason for feeling bound, as one might say, to go to church well in the country."

"I suppose one must not venture to ask you what that reason is, sir."

"Oh yes, to be sure. It is just this. I have an uncle, my mother's brother, who is a country clergyman."

"Well done, Master Lorraine!" said the Grower, while the rest were laughing. "You take a very sensible view, sir, of things. It is too much the fashion nowadays to neglect our trade-connections. But Gregory will go with you, and Phyllis, and Mabel. The old people stay at home to mind the house. For we always let the maid-servants go."

"Oh father," cried Mabel; "poor Phyllis is so overcome by the heat, that she must not go. And I must stop at home to read to her."

So that the good Lorraine took nothing by his sudden religious fervour, except a hot walk with Gregory, and a wearisome doze in a musty pew, with nobody to look at.

With fruit-growers, Monday is

generally the busiest day of the week, except Friday. After paying all hands on the Saturday night, and stowing away all implements, they rest them well till the Sunday is over, having in the summer-time earned their rest, by night-work as well as day-work, through the weary hours of the week. This is not the case with all, of course. Many of them, especially down in Kent, grow their fruit, or let it grow itself, and then sell it by the acre, or the hundred acres, to dealers, who take all the gathering and marketing off their hands altogether. But for those who work off their own crops, the toil of the week begins before the daystar of the Monday. At least for about six weeks it is so, according to the weather and the length of the "busy season." Before the stars fade out of the sky, the pickers advance through the strawberry quarters, carrying two punnets each, yawning more than chattering even, whisking the grey dew away with their feet, startling the lark from his nest in the row, groping among the crisp leaves for the fruit, and often laying hold of a slug instead.

That is the time for the true fruit-lover to try the taste of a strawberry. It should be one that refused to ripen in the gross heat of yesterday, but has been slowly fostering goodness, with the attestation of the stars. And now (if it has been properly managed, properly picked without touch of hand, and not laid down profanely), when the sun comes over the top of the hedge, the look of that strawberry will be this—at least if it is of a proper sort. The beard of the footstalk will be stiff, the sepals of the calyx moist and crisp, the neck will show a narrow band of varnish, where the dew could find no hold, the belly of the fruit will be sleek and gentle, firm however to accept its fate; but the

back that has dealt with the dew, and the sides where the colour of the back slopes downward, upon them such a gloss of cold and diamond chastity will lie, that the human lips get out of patience with the eyes in no time.

Everybody was so busy with the way the work went on, all for their very life pretending scarcely to have time to breathe, whenever the master looked at them, that the "berries" were picked, and packed, and started, long before the sun grew hot, started on the road to London, the cormorant of the universe.

Hilary helped with all his heart; enjoying it, with that triumphant entrance into any novelty, which always truly distinguished him. He carried his punnets, and kept his row, (as soon as they had shown him how) as well as the very best of them, dividing his fruit into firsts, and seconds, and keeping the "toppers" separate. Of course he broke off many trusses entire—ripe fruit, green fruit, and barren blossom—until he learned how to "meet his nails," and how much drag to put on the stalks. A clever fellow learns all that from an hour or two of practice.

But one thing there is which the cleverest fellows can learn by no experience—how to carry the head for hours upside down without hurting it. How to make the brain so hard that it cannot shift; or else so soft that the top is as good as the bottom. The question is one for a great physician; who, to understand it, must keep his row, and pick by the job. Then let him say if he has learned how to explain the well-established fact that a woman can pick twice as fast as a man; for who could assent to the reason assigned by one of themselves sagaciously—that "they were generally always used to keep their heads turned upside down"?

Leaving such speculative inquiries to go on for ever, Hilary (who knew

better than to say a word about them) came in for his breakfast at six o'clock, and ate it as thoroughly as he had earned it. The master, a man of true Kentish fibre, obstinate, placable, hearty, and dry, made known to his wife and to everybody else, his present opinion of Hilary. Martin Lovejoy never swore. He never went beyond "God knows," or "The Lord in heaven look down on us," or some other good exclamation, sanctioned by the parish vicar. As a general rule—proved by many exceptions—the Kentish men seldom swear very hard.

"Heart alive, young sir!" He exclaimed, piling Hilary's plate, as he spoke, with the jellied delights of cold pigeon-pie; "you have been the best man of the morning. Ah, don't you be in a hurry, good wife. No tea, or coffee, our way, thank ye. No nor any cask-wash. We've worked a little too hard for that. Mabel, whatever has come to you, that you keep always out of the way so? And I never saw you anigh the baskets. Now don't pipe your eye, child. I'm not going to scold thee, if thou didst have a little lie-a-bed. Here, take this here key, child. A wink's as good as a nod—ah, she knows pretty well what to do with it."

For Mabel was glad to turn away as quickly as possible, after a little well-managed curtsy to Hilary, whom she had not seen for the morning—certainly through no fault of his—and without a word she went to the dresser (for in these busy times they took their breakfast wisely in the kitchen), and from the wooden crook unhung a quaint little jug, with a narrow mouth and a silver lip and handle. With this she set off down a narrow passage and some steps to a little stone cellar, where the choicest of the home-brewed ale was kept. Although it lay well beneath the level of the ground, and no ray of



sun pierced the wired lattice, the careful mistress of the house had the barrels swathed closely with wetted sacks. The girl, with her neat frock gathered up—for she always was cleanliness itself—went carefully to the corner cask, and lifted the wet sack back from the head, lest any dirty water should have the chance of dripping upon her sleeve. Then she turned the tap, and a thin bright thread ran out of it sideways, being checked by some hops in the tube, perhaps, or want of air at the vent-peg. But Mabel held the jug with all patience, although her hand shook just a little.

"Now," said the Grower, when she came back and placed the jug at her father's side, without a word to Hilary; "Master Lorraine, let me pour you a drop, not to be matched in Kent; nor yet in all England, I do believe. Home-grown barley, and home-grown hops, and the soft water out of the brook that has taken the air of the sky for seven mile or more, without a drain anigh it. Ah, those brewers can never do that! They must buy their malt, and their musty hops, and pump up their water, and boil it down, to get the flint-stones out of it. But our brook hath cast the flint-stones and the other pebbles all along. That makes a sight of difference, sir. Every water is full of stones, and if you pump it up from the spring, the stones be all alive in it. But let it run seven miles or eight, and then it is fit to brew with."

"Ah, to be sure. Now that explains a great many things I never understood." Hilary would have swallowed a camel, rather than argue, at this moment.

"Young sir, just let me prove it to you. Just see the colour it runs out, and the way the head goes creaming! Lord, ha' mercy, if she has gived us a glass, or a stag's

horn from the mantelpiece! Why, Mabel, child—Mabel, art thou gone? Nobody wants to poison thee."

"I think, sir, I saw your daughter go round the corner by the warming-pan, this side of where the broom hangs."

"Then all I can say is, she is daft. She worked very hard last week, poor thing. And yesterday she was a-moving always, when the Lord's day bids us rest. I must beg your pardon, Master Lorraine. Our Kentish maids always look after our guests. When I was at school, I read in the grammar that the moon always managed the women; but now I do believe it is the comet. Let the comet come, say I. When the markets are so bad, I feel that I am ready to face almost anything. And now we must drink from the jug, I reckon!"

Hilary saw that his host was vexed; but he felt quite certain in his own heart that Mabel could never be so rude, or show such resentment of any little over-sweetness on his part, as to go away in that sour earnest, and make the two of them angry. A dozen things might have happened to upset her, or turn her a little askew; and her own father ought to know her better than he seemed to do. And lo, ere the Grower had quite finished grumbling, Mabel reached over his shoulder unseen, and set his own pet glass before him; and then round Hilary's side she slid, without ever coming too nigh to him, and the glass of honour of the house, cut in countless facets, twinkled, like the Pleiads, at him!

"Adorn me!" said the Grower; "now I call that a true good girl! Girls were always made, Master Lorraine, for the good of those around them. If anybody treats them any way else, they come to nothing afterwards. Mabel, dear, give me a kiss. You deserve it;

and there it is for you. Now be off, like a good maid, and see what they be at in Vale Orchard, while Master Lorraine and I think a bit over these here two glasses."

The rest of the day was much too busy, and too much crowded with sharp eyes, for any fair chance of love-making. For they all set to at the cherry-trees, with ladders, crooks, and hanging baskets, and light boys to scale the more difficult antlers, strip them, and drop upon feather-beds. And though the sun broke hot and bright through the dew-cloud of the morning, and quickly drank the beaded freshness off the face of herb and tree, yet they picked, and piled, and packed, (according to their sort and size) the long-stalked dancers that fringe the bough, and glance the sun so ruddily.

"You must have had a deal too much of this," young Lovejoy said to Hilary; when the noon-day meal had been spread forth, and dealt with, in a patch of fern near a breezy clump: "if I had worked as you have done, my fingers would scarcely be fit for a quill, this side of next Hilary term."

"My dear fellow, be not, I pray you, so violently facetious. The brain, when outraged, takes longer to resume its functions than the fingers do. Moreover, I trust that my fingers will hold something nobler than a quill, ere the period of my namesake."

"Sir Hilary charged at Agincourt; I hope you will do nothing of the sort;" said Gregory, with unwitting and unprecedented poetry.

"Lovejoy, my wits are unequal altogether to this encounter. The

brilliancy of your native soil has burst out so upon you, that I must go back to the Southdown hills, before I dare point a dart with you. Nevertheless, on your native soil, I beat you at picking cherries."

"That you do, and strawberries too. And still more so at eating them! But if you please, you must stop a little. My mother begs, as a great favour, to have a little private talk with you."

Hilary's bright face lost its radiance, as his conscience pricked him. Was it about Mabel? Of course it must be. And what the dickens was he to say? He could not say a false thing. That was far below his nature. And he must own that he did love Mabel; and far worse than that—had done his utmost to drag that young and innocent Mabel into love with him. And if he were asked about his father—as of course he must be—on the word of a true man he must confess that his father would never forgive him if he married below his rank in life: also, that though he was the only son, there were very peculiar provisions in the settlement of the Lorraine estates, which might throw him entirely upon his own wits, if his father turned against him: also, that though his father was one of the very best men in the world, and the kindest and loftiest you could find; still there was about him something of a cold and determined substance. And worst of all (if the whole truth was to be shelled out, as he must unshell it), he knew in his heart that his father loved his sister's little finger more than all the members, put together, of his own too lively frame.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

Mrs Lovejoy sat far away from all the worry, and flurry, and fun

of picking, and packing, and covering up. She had never entirely given



herself to the glories of fruit-growing; and she never could be much convinced that any glory was in it. She belonged to a higher rank of life than any of such sons of Cain. Her father had been a navy-captain; and her cousin was Attorney-General. This office has always been confounded in the provincial mind, with rank in a less pugnacious profession. Even Mrs Lovejoy thought, when the land was so full of "militiamen," that her cousin was the General of the "Devil's Own" of the period. Therefore she believed herself to know more than usual about the law; as well as the army, and of course the navy. And this high position in the legal army of so near a relation helped, no doubt, to foster hopes of the elevation of Gregory.

"I beg your pardon, Mr Lorraine," she began, as Hilary entered the bower, to which she had just retired, "for calling you away from a scene, which you enjoy perhaps from its novelty; and where you make yourself, I am sure, so exceedingly active and useful. But I feared, as you must unluckily so very soon return to London, that I might have no other chance of asking what your candid opinion is upon a matter I have very near at heart."

"Deuce and all!" thought Hilary within himself, being even more vexed than relieved by this turn of incidence; "she is much cleverer than I thought. Instead of hauling me over the coals, she is going to give me the sack at once; and I didn't mean to go, for a week at least!" Mrs Lovejoy enjoyed his surprise, as he stammered that any opinion he could form was entirely at her service.

"I am sure that you know what it is about. You must have guessed at once, of course, when I was rude enough to send for you, what subject is nearest to a mother's heart.

I wish to ask you, what they think of my son Gregory, in London."

Lorraine, for the moment, was a little upset. His presence of mind had been worked so hard, that it was beginning to flutter and shift. And much as he liked his fellow-pupil, he had not begun to consider him yet as an object of public opinion.

"I think—I really think," he said, while waiting for time to think more about it, "that he is going on as well as ever could be expected, ma'am."

If he had wanted to vex his hostess—which to his kind nature would have been one of the last things wanted—he scarcely could have hit on a phrase more fitted for his purpose.

"Why, Mr Lorraine, that is exactly what the monthly nurses say! I hope you can say something a little better than that of Gregory."

"I assure you, Mrs Lovejoy, nothing can be finer than the way he is going on. His attention, punctuality, steadiness, and everything else, leave nothing to be desired, as all the wine-merchants always say. Mr Malahide holds him up as a pattern to be avoided, because he works so hard, and I think that he really ought to have country air, at this time of year, and in such weather, for a week; at the very shortest."

"Poor boy! Why should he overwork himself? Then you think that three days' change is scarcely enough to set him up again?"

"He wants at least a fortnight, ma'am. He has a sort of a hacking cough, which he does his best to keep under. And the doctors say that the smell of ink out of a pewter inkstand, and the inhaling of blotting-paper—such as we inhale all day—are almost certain, in hot weather, to root a tussis, or at any rate a pituita, inwards."

Mrs Lovejoy was much impressed, and tenfold so when she tried to think what those maladies might be.

"Dear me!" she said: "it is dreadful to think of. I know too well what those sad complaints are. My dear grandfather died of them both. Do you think now, Mr Lorraine, that Mr Malahide could be persuaded to spare you both for the rest of the week?"

"I scarcely think that he could, Mrs Lovejoy. We are his right hand, and his left. Your son, of course, his dexter hand; and my poor self the weaker member. Still if you were to write to him, nicely (as of course you would be sure to write), he might make an effort to get on, with some of his inferior pupils."

"It shall be done, before the van goes——by the very next mail, I mean. And if they can spare you, do you think that you could put up with your very poor quarters, for a few days longer, Mr Lorraine?"

"I never was in such quarters before. And I never felt so comfortable;" he answered, with a gush of truth, to expiate much small hypocrisy. And thereby he settled himself for ever in her very best graces. If Mrs Lovejoy had any pride—and she always told herself she had none—that pride lay in her best feather-beds.

A smile, quite worthy of her larger husband and of her pleasant homestead, spread itself over her thoughtful face; and Hilary, for the first time, saw that her daughter, after all, was born of her. What can be sweeter than a smile, won from a sensible woman like that?

"Then you give us some hope that we may endeavour to keep you a few days more, sir?"

"The endeavour will be on my part," he answered with his most elegant bow; "as all the temptation falls on me."

"I do hope that Mr Malahide will

do his best to spare you both. Though to lose both his right hand and his left hand must be very melancholy."

"To a lawyer, Mrs Lovejoy, that is nothing. We think nothing of such trifles. We are ready to fight when we have no hands, nor even a leg to stand upon."

"Yes, to be sure, you live by fighting, as the poor sailors and soldiers do. The general of the Attorneys now is my first cousin, once removed. Now can you tell me what opinion he has formed of my Gregory? Of course there must be a number of people trying to keep my poor boy back. Pressing him down, as they always do, with all that narrow jealousy. But his mother's cousin might be trusted to give him fair play, now, don't you think?"

"One never can tell," answered Hilary; "the faster a young fellow goes up the tree, the harder the monkeys pelt him. But if I only had a quarter of your son's ability, I would defy them all at once, from the Lord Chief-Justice downward."

"Oh no, now, Mr Lorraine; that really would be bad advice. He has not been called to the Bar as yet; and he must remember that there are people many years in front of him. No, no; let Gregory wait for his proper time in its proper course, and steadily rise to the top of the tree. With patience, Mr Lorraine, you know, with patience all things come to pass. But I must go to the house at once, and write to Mr Malahide. Do you think that he would be offended, if I asked him to accept a basket of our choicest cherries and strawberries?"

"I scarcely think that he would regard it as a mortal injury; especially if you were to put it as a tribute from his grateful pupil, Hilary Lorraine."

"How kind of you to let me use your name! And you have such



influence with him, Gregory is always telling me. No doubt he will accept them so."

However, when she came to consider the matter, Mrs Lovejoy, with shameful treachery, sent them as a little offering from that grateful pupil her own son: while she laid upon Hilary all the burden of this lengthened mitching-time; as in the main perhaps was just. Moreover, she took good care that Shorne should have no chance of appearing in chambers, as he was only too eager to do; for her shrewd sense told her that the sharp wits there would find him a joy for ever, and an enduring joke against Gregory.

It is scarcely needful to say, perhaps, that throughout the rest of the week, Lorraine did his utmost to bring about snug little interviews with Mabel. And she, having made up her mind to keep him henceforth at his distance, felt herself bound by that resolution to afford him a glimpse or two, once in a way. For she really had a great deal to do; and it would have been cruel to deny her even the right to talk of it. And Hilary carried a basket so much better than anybody else, and his touch was so light, and he stepped here and there so obediently and so cleverly, and he always looked away so nicely, if anything happened to her frock—as now and then of course must be—that Mabel began every day to think how dreadfully she would miss him.

And then, as if it were not enough to please her ears, and eyes, and mind, he even contrived to conciliate the most grateful part of the human system, as well as the most intelligent. For on the Tuesday afternoon, the turn of the work, and the courses of fruit, led them near a bushy corner where the crafty brook stole though. As clever and snug an angle as need be, for a pair of young people to drop accidentally out of sight and ear-shot. For

here, the corner of the orchard fell away, as a quarry does, yet was banked with grass, and ridges, so that children might take hands and run. But if they did so, they would be certain to come to grief at the bottom, unless they could clear at a jump three yards, which would puzzle most of them. For here the brook, without any noise, came under a bank of good brown loam, with a gentle shallow slide, and a bottom content to be run over.

"Trout, as I'm a living sinner!" cried Hilary with a fierce delight, as he fetched up suddenly on the brink, and a dozen streaks darted up the stream, like the throw of a threaded shuttle. "My prophetic soul, if I didn't guess it! But I seem to forget almost everything. Why Miss Lovejoy, Miss Mabel Lovejoy, Mabel Miss Lovejoy, (or any other form, insisting on the prefix despotically) have I known you for a century or more, and you never told me there were trout in the brook!"

"Oh do let me see them; please to show me where;" cried Mabel, coming carefully down the steep, lest her slender feet should slip: "they are such dears, I do assure you. My mother and I are so fond of them. But my father says they are all bones and tail."

"I will show them to you with the greatest pleasure, only you must do just what I order you. They are very shy things, you know, almost as shy as somebody——"

"Mabel, Mabel, Mab, where are you?" came a loud shout over the crest; and then Gregory's square shoulders appeared, a most unwelcome spectacle.

"Why, here I am to be sure," she answered; "where else do you suppose I should be? The people must be looked after, I suppose. And if you won't do it, of course I must."

"I don't see any people to look

after here, except indeed—however, you seem to have looked so hard, it has made you quite red in the face, I declare!”

“Now Greg, my boy,” cried Hilary, suddenly coming to the rescue; “I called your sister down here on purpose to tell me what those things in the water are. They look almost like some sort of fish!”

“Why, trout, Lorraine! Didn’t you know that? I thought that you were a great fisherman. If you like to have a try at them, I can fit you out. Though I don’t suppose you could do much in this weather.”

“Miss Lovejoy, did you ever taste a trout?” Hilary asked this question, as if not a word had yet passed on the subject.

“Oh yes,” answered Mabel, no less oblivious; “my brother Charles used to catch a good many. They are such a treat to my dear mother, and so good for her constitution. But I don’t think my father appreciates them.”

“Allow me to help you up this steep rise. It was most inconsiderate of me to call you down, Miss Lovejoy.”

“Pray do not mention it, Mr Lorraine. Gregory, how rude you are to give Mr Lorraine all this trouble! But you never were famous for good manners.”

“If I meddle with them again,” thought Gregory, “may I be adorned, as my father says! However, I must keep a sharp look-out. The girl is getting quite independent; and I,—oh, I am to be nobody! I’ll just go and see what Phyllis thinks of it.”

But Mabel, who had not forgiven him yet for his insolent remarks about her cheeks, deprived him of even that comfort.

“Now Gregory dear, you have done nothing all day but wander about with cousin Phyllis. Just stay here for a couple of hours; if you can’t work yourself, your look-

ing on will make the other people work. I am quite ashamed of my inattention to Mr Lorraine all the afternoon. I am sure he must want a glass of ale, after all he has gone through. And while he takes it, I can rout out Charlie’s tackle for him. I know where it is, and you do not. And Charlie left it especially under my charge, you remember.”

“That is the first I have heard of it. However, if Lorraine wants beer, why so do I. Send Phyllis out with a jug for me.”

“Yes, to be sure, dear. To be sure. How delighted she will be to come!”

“As delighted as you are to go;” he replied; but she was already out of hearing; and all he took for his answer was an indignant look from Hilary.

An excellent and most patient fisherman used to say that the greatest pleasure of the gentle art was found in the preparation to fish. In the making of flies, and the knotting of gut, and the softening of collars that have caught fish, and the choosing of what to try this time, and how to treat the river. The treasures of memory glow again, and the sparkling stores of hope awake to a lively emulation.

Hilary’s mind had securely landed every fish in the brook at least, and laid it at the feet of Mabel, ere ever his tackle was put to rights, and everything else made ready. At last he was at the very point of starting, with his ever high spirits at their very loftiest pitch, when Mabel (who was scarcely a whit behind him in the excitement of this great matter) ran in for the fiftieth time at least, but this time wearing her evening frock. That frock was of a delicate buff, and she had a suspicion that it enhanced the clearness of her complexion, and the kind and deep loveliness of her eyes.

“You must be quite tired of seeing me, I am as sure as sure can be. But I am not come now to tie knots,



or untie ; and you quite understand all I know about trout, and all that my dear brother Charlie said. Ah, Mr Lorraine, you should see him. Gregory is a genius, of course. But Charlie is not ; and that makes him so nice. And his uniform, when he went to church with us—but to understand such things, you must see them. Still, you can understand this now, perhaps.”

“I can understand nothing, when I look at you. My intellect seems to be quite absorbed in—in—I can’t tell you in what.”

“Then go, and absorb it in catching trout. Though I don’t believe you will ever catch one. It requires the greatest skill and patience, when the water is bright, and the weather dry. So Charlie always said, when he could not catch them. Unless you take to a worm, at least, or something a great deal nastier.”

“A worm ! I would sooner lime them almost. Now you know me better than that, I am sure.”

“How should I know all the different degrees of cruelty men have established ? But I came to beg you just to take a little bit of food with you. Because you must be away some hours, and you are sure to lose your way.”

“How wonderfully kind you are ! Mabel, you must be Mabel now.”

“Well, I suppose I have been Mabel, ever since they christened me. But that has nothing at all to do with it. Only I came to make you put this half of cold duck into your basket, and this pinch of salt, and the barley-cake, and a drop of our ale in this stone bottle. To drink it, you must do like this.”

“Do you know what I shall be wanting, every bit of the time, and for ever ?”

“Oh, the mustard—how stupid of me ! but I hoped that the stuffing would do instead.”

“Instead of the cold half duck, I shall want every atom of the whole duck, warm.”

“Well, there they are, Mr Lorraine, in the yard. Fourteen of them now coming up from the pond. Take one of them if you can eat it raw. But my mother will make you pay for it.”

“I will pay for my duck,” he said, lifting his hat ; “if it costs me every farthing I have, or shall ever have, in this world, or another.”

And so he went fishing ; and she ran up-stairs, and softly cried, as she watched him going ; and then lay down, with her hand on her heart.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

The trout knew nothing of all this. They had not tasted a worm for a month, except when a sod of the bank fell in, through cracks of the sun, and the way cold water has of licking upward. And even the flies had no flavour at all ; when they fell on the water, they fell flat, and on the palate they tasted hot, even in under the bushes.

Hilary followed a path through the meadows, with the calm bright sunset casting his shadow over the shorn grass, or up in the hedge road, or on the brown banks where

the drought had struck. On his back he carried a fishing-basket, containing his bits of refreshment ; and in his right hand a short springy rod, the absent sailor’s favourite. After long council with Mabel, he had made up his mind to walk up stream, as far as the spot where two brooks met, and formed body enough for a fly flipped in very carefully to sail downward. Here he began, and the creak of his reel, and the swish of his rod, were music to him, after the whirl of London life.

The brook was as bright as the best cut glass, and the twinkles of its shifting facets only made it seem more clear. It twisted about a little, here and there; and the brink was fringed now and then with something, a clump of loose-strife, a tuft of avens, or a bed of flowering water-cress, or any other of the many plants that wash and look into the water. But the trout, the main object in view, were most objectionably too much in view. They scudded up the brook, at the shadow of a hair, or even the tremble of a blade of grass; and no pacific assurance could make them even stop to be reasoned with. "This won't do," said Hilary, who very often talked to himself, in lack of a better comrade: "I call this very hard upon me. The beggars won't rise, till it is quite dark. I must have the interdict off my tobacco, if this sort of thing is to go on. How I should enjoy a pipe just now! I may just as well sit on a gate and think. No, hang it, I hate thinking now. There are troubles hanging over me, as sure as the tail of that comet grows. How I detest that comet! No wonder the fish won't rise. But if I have to strip, and tickle them in the dark, I won't go back without some for her."

He was lucky enough to escape the weight of such horrible poaching upon his conscience. For suddenly to his ears was borne the most melodious of all sounds, the flop of a heavy fish sweetly jumping after some excellent fly or grub.

"Ha, my friend!" cried Hilary; "so you are up for your supper, are you? I myself will awake right early. Still I behold the ring you made. If my right hand forget not his cunning, you shall form your next ring in the frying-pan."

He gave that fish a little time to think of the beauty of that mouthful, and get ready for another; the

while he was putting a white moth on, in lieu of his blue-upright. He kept the grizzled palmer still for tail-fly, and he tried his knots, for he knew that this trout was a Triton.

Then, with a delicate sidling and stooping, known only to them that fish for trout in very bright water of the summer-time—compared with which art, the coarse work of the salmon-fisher is as that of a scene-painter to Mr Holman Hunt's—with, or in, and by a careful manner, not to be described to those who have never studied it, Hilary won access of the water, without any doubt in the mind of the fish concerning the prudence of appetite. Then he flipped his short collar in, not with a cast, but a spring of the rod, and let his flies go quietly down a sharpish run into that good trout's hole. The worthy trout looked at them both, and thought; for he had his own favourite spot for watching the world go by, as the rest of us have. So he let the grizzled palmer pass, within an inch of his upper lip; for it struck him that the tail turned up in a manner not wholly natural, or at any rate unwholesome. He looked at the white moth also, and thought that he had never seen one at all like it. So he went down under his root again, hugging himself upon his wisdom, never moving a fin, but oaring and helming his plump spotted sides with his tail.

"Upon my word, it is too bad!" said Hilary, after three beautiful throws, and exquisite management down stream; "everything Kentish beats me hollow. Now, if that had been one of our trout, I would have laid my life upon catching him. One more throw, however. How would it be if I sunk my flies? That fellow is worth some patience."

While he was speaking, his flies alit on the glassy ripple, like gnats in their love-dance; and then by a



turn of the wrist he played them just below the surface, and let them go gliding down the stickle, into the shelfy nook of shadow, where the big trout hovered. Under the surface, floating thus, with the check of ductile influence, the two flies spread their wings, and quivered, like a centiplume moth in a spider's web. Still the old trout, calmly oaring, looked at them both suspiciously. Why should the same flies come so often, and why should they have such crooked tails, and could he be sure that he did not spy the shadow of a human hat about twelve yards up the water? Revolving these things he might have lived to a venerable age—but for that noble ambition to teach, which is fatal to even the wisest. A young fish, an insolent whipper-snapper, jumped in his babyish way at the palmer, and missed it through over-eagerness. "I'll show you the way to catch a fly," said the big trout to him; "open your mouth like this, my son."

With that he bolted the palmer, and threw up his tail, and turned to go home again. Alas! his sweet home now shall know him no more. For suddenly he was surprised by a most disagreeable sense of grittiness, and then a keen stab in the roof of his mouth. He jumped in his wrath a foot out of the water, and then heavily plunged to the depths of his hole.

"You've got it, my friend," cried Hilary, in a tingle of fine emotions; "I hope the sailor's knots are tied with professional skill and care. You are a big one, and a clever one too. It is much if I ever land you. No net, or gaff, or anything. I only hope there are no stakes here. Ah, there you go! Now comes the tug."

Away went the big trout down the stream, at a pace very hard to exaggerate, and after him rushed Hilary, knowing that his line was rather short, and that if it ran out,

all was over. Keeping his eyes on the water only, and the headlong speed of the fugitive, headlong over a stake he fell, and took a deep wound from another stake. Scarcely feeling it, up he jumped, lifting his rod, which had fallen flat, and fearing to find no strain on it. "Aha, he is not gone yet!" he cried, as the rod bowed like a spring-bow.

He was now a good hundred yards down the brook, from the corner where the fight began. Through his swiftness of foot, and good management, the fish had never been able to tighten the line beyond yield of endurance. The bank had been free from bushes, or haply no skill could have saved him; but now they were come to a corner where a nutbush quite overhung the stream.

"I am done for now," said the fisherman; "the villain knows too well what he is about. Here ends this adventure."

Full though he was of despair, he jumped anyhow into the water, kept the point of his rod close down, reeled up a little, as the fish felt weaker, and just cleared the drop of the hazel-boughs. The water flapped into the pockets of his coat, and he saw red streaks flow downward. And then he plunged out to an open reach of shallow water and gravel slope.

"I ought to have you now," he said; "though nobody knows what a rogue you are; and a pretty dance you have led me!"

Doubting the strength of his tackle to lift even the dead weight of the fish, and much more to meet his despairing rally, he happily saw a little shallow gut, or backwater, where a small spring ran out. Into this by a dexterous turn he rather led than pulled the fish, who was ready to rest for a minute or two; then he stuck his rod into the bank, ran down stream, and with his hat

in both hands appeared at the only exit from the gut. It was all up now with the monarch of the brook. As he skipped and jumped, with his rich yellow belly, and chaste silver sides, in the green of the grass, joy and glory of the highest merit, and gratitude, glowed in the heart of Lorraine. "Two and three quarters you must weigh. And at your very best you are! How small your head is! And how bright your spots are!" he cried, as he gave him the stroke of grace. "You really have been a brave and fine fellow. I hope they will know how to fry you."

While he cut his fly out of this grand trout's mouth, he felt for the first time a pain in his knee, where the point of the stake had entered it. Under the buckle of his breeches blood was soaking away inside his gaiters; and then he saw how he had dyed the water. After washing the wound and binding it with dock-leaves and a handkerchief, he followed the stream through a few more meadows, for the fish began to sport pretty well as the gloom of the evening deepened; so that by the time the gables of the old farmhouse appeared, by the light of a young moon, and the comet, Lorraine had a dozen more trout in his basket, silvery-sided and handsome fellows, though none of them over a pound, perhaps, except his first and redoubtable captive.

Herewith he resolved to be content, for his knee was now very sore and stiff, and the growing darkness baffled him; while having forgotten his food, as behoved him, he was conscious of an agreeable fitness for the supper-table. Here, of course, he had to tell, at least thrice over, his fight with the Triton, who turned the scale at three pounds and a quarter, and was recognised as an old friend and twice conqueror of the absent Charlie. Mrs Lovejoy (as was to be expected) made a great

ado about the gash in the knee—which really was no trifle—while Mabel said nothing, but blamed herself deeply for having equipped him to such misfortune.

For the next few days Master Hilary was compelled to keep his active frame in rest, and quiet, and cossetting. Even the Grower, a man of strong manhood, accustomed to scythe-cuts, and chopper-hits, and pole-springs, admitted that this was a case for broth, and low feeding, and things that the women do. For if inflammation set up, the boy might have only one leg left for life. It was high time, however, for the son of the house to return to his beloved law-books; so that he tore himself away from Phyllis, and started in the van, about noon on Friday, having promised to send back by John Shorne all that his fellow-pupil wanted.

Lorraine soon found that his kind and quick hostess loved few things better than a cheerful, dutiful, and wholesome-blooded patient; and therefore he rejected with scorn all suggestions as to his need of a "proper doctor." And herein the Grower backed him up.

"Adorn me, if any one of them ever lays finger on me, any more than on my good father before me! They handle us when we are born, of course, and come to no manner of judgment; but if we let them handle us afterwards, we deserve to go out of the world with them."

This sound discretion (combined with the plentiful use of cold water and healing herbs) set Hilary on his legs again in about eight or ten days' time. Meanwhile he had seen very little of Mabel, whether through her fault or that of others—he could not tell—only that so it was. Whenever his hostess was out of the way, Phyllis Clitherow, or else the housemaid, did their best to supply her place; and very often the Grower dropped in, to enjoy his



pipe, and to cheer his guest. By means of simple truth they showed him that he was no burden to them, even at this busy time.

After all this, it was only natural that Hilary should become much attached as well as grateful to his entertainers. Common formality was dropped, and caste entirely sunk in hearty liking and loving-kindness. And young Lorraine was delighted to find how many pleasant virtues flourished under the thatch of that old house, uncoveted and undisturbed, inasmuch as their absence was not felt in the mansions of great people.

This affection for virtue doubtless made him feel sadly depressed and lonely, when the time at length arrived for quitting so much excellence.

"In the van he came, and in the van he would go," he replied to all remonstrance; and the Grower liked him all the better for his loyalty to the fruit-coach. So it was settled when Crusty John was "going up light" for a Thursday morning, that Hilary should have a mattress laid in the body of the vehicle, and a horse-cloth to throw over him, if the night should prove a cold one. For now a good drop of rain had fallen, and the weather seemed on the change awhile.

"I must catch you another dish of trout," said Hilary to Mrs Lovejoy; "when shall I have such a chance again? The brook is in beautiful order now; and thanks to your wonderful skill and kindness, I can walk again quite well now."

"Yes, for a little way you can. But you must be sure not to overdo it. You may fish one meadow, and one only. Let me see. You may fish the long meadow, Hilary; then you will have neither stile nor hedge. The gate at this end unlatches, mind. And I will send Phyllis to let you out at the lower

end, and to see that you dare not go one step further. She shall be there at half-past six. The van goes at eight, you know, and we must sit down to supper at seven exactly."

Upon this understanding he set forth, about five o'clock in the afternoon, and meeting Miss Clitherow in the lane, he begged her, as an especial favour, to keep out of Mrs Lovejoy's way for the next two hours only. Phyllis, a good-natured girl on the whole, though a little too proud of her beauty perhaps, readily promised what he asked, and retired to a seat in the little ash coppice to read a poem, and meditate upon the absent Gregory.

Lorraine was certainly in luck to-day, for he caught a nice basket of fish down the meadow; and towards the last stickle near the corner, where silver threads of water crossed, and the slanting sunshine cast a plaid of soft gold over them, light footsteps came by the side of the hedge, and a pretty shadow fell near him.

"Miss Lovejoy!" cried Hilary: "how you amaze me! Why, I thought it was Phyllis who was coming to fetch me. I may call her Phyllis, oh yes, she allows me. She is not so very ceremonious. But some people are all dignity."

"Now you want to vex me the very last thing. And they call you so sweet-tempered! I am so sorry for your disappointment about your dear friend Phyllis. But I am sure I looked for her everywhere, before I was obliged to come myself. Now I hope you have not found the poor little trout quite so hard to please as you are."

"At any rate, not so shy of me, as somebody has been for a fortnight. Because I was in trouble, I suppose, and pain, and supposed to be groaning."

"How can you say such bitter

things? It shows how very little you care—at least, that is not what I mean at all.”

“Then, if you please, what is it that you do mean?”

“I mean that here is the key of the gate. And my father will expect you at seven o’clock.”

“But surely you will have a look at my trout? They cannot bite, if I can.”

He laid his fishing-creel down on the grass, and Mabel stooped over it to hide her eyes; which (in spite of all pride and prudence) were not exactly as she could have wished. But they happened to be exactly as Hilary wished, and catching a glimpse of them unawares, he lost all ideas except of them, and basely compelled them to look at him.

“Now, Mabel Lovejoy,” he said, slowly, and with some dread of his own voice; “can you look me in the face, and tell me you do not care twopence for me?”

“I am not in the habit of being rude,” she answered, with a sly glance from under her hat; “that I leave for other people.”

“Well, do you like me, or do you not?”

“You do ask the most extraordinary questions. We are bound to like our visitors.”

“I will ask a still more extraordinary question. Do you love me, Mabel?”

For a very long time he got no answer, except a little smothered sob, and two great tears that would have their way. “Darling Mabel, look up and tell me. Why should you be ashamed to say? I am very proud of loving you. Lovely Mabel, do you love me?”

“I—I—I am—very—much afraid—I almost do.”

She shrank away from his arms and eyes, and longed to be left to herself for a little. And then she thought what a mean thing it was to be taking advantage of his bad leg.

With that, she came back, and to change his thoughts said, “Show me a trout in the brook now, Hilary.”

“You deserve to see fifty for being so good. There, you must help me along, you know. Now just stand here, and let me hold you, carefully and most steadily. No, not like that. That will never do. I must at least have one arm round you, or in you go, and I have to answer for your being ‘drowned’!”

“Drowned! You take advantage now to make me so ridiculous. The water is scarcely six inches deep. But where are the little troutsies?”

“There! There! Do you see that white stone? Now look at it most steadfastly, and then you are sure not to see them. Now turn your head like that, a little, not too much, whatever you do. Now, what do you see, most clearly?”

“Why, I see nothing but you and me, in the shadow of that oak-tree, standing over the water, as if we had nothing better in the world to do!”

“We are standing together, though. Don’t you think so?”

“Well, even the water seems to think so. And what can be more changeable?”

“Now look at me, and not at the water. Mabel, you know what I am.”

“Hilary, I wish I did. That is the very thing that takes such a long time to find out.”

“Now, did I treat you in such a spirit? Did I look at you, and think, ‘here is a rogue I must find out’?”

“No, of course, you never did. That is not in your nature. At the same time, perhaps, it might not matter so long to you, as it must to me.”

She met his glad eyes with a look so wistful, yet of such innocent reliance, to assuage the harm of words, that Hilary might be well excused for keeping the Grower’s supper waiting, as he did that evening.



## INTERNATIONAL VANITIES.

## NO. V.—EMBLEMS.

THE word emblem, in its national application, represents to most of us a flag, and little else. But it has other meanings too; less important and less self-evident, it is true, but which well merit to be remembered. Images of animals, badges, war-cries, cockades, liveries, coats of arms, tokens, and tattooing, have all been accepted symbols of distinction between races; and though, in our time, those symbols have lost the greater part of their importance, and are almost everywhere replaced, practically, by the ensign, they still retain their historic interest, and form essential elements of the question. And, in addition to the variety of details which it thus presents, the subject possesses one rare and special merit: of all the forms in which the pride of nations has exhibited its pertinacity and its strength, this one notion of the symbol is perhaps the only one which provokes our unhesitating approbation. There is something strangely noble in the principle that the dignity, the power, and the glory of a great people may be represented by an emblem; something impressive in the thought that every member of that people can protect himself, no matter where, by the simple exhibition of that emblem. It is indisputably a form of vanity, otherwise it could not be included here; but it is a vanity which stands alone, high up above all others. We may smile at the exaggerations which it has occasionally assumed, at the pretensions which have sometimes been based upon it; but the smile will be respectful, and not one amongst us

will be able to really laugh at the little weaknesses of so grand and so illustrious a pride. Just as we feel an instinctive reverence when our own flag goes by, so do we regard with deferential sympathy the entire theory of state signs; so do we cordially extend to the symbols of other lands the courtesy and the homage which we require for our own. And the theory is a very old one; it is no invention of to-day; it goes back into our earliest beginnings, so far, indeed, that we can fix no commencement for it. From all time men have used emblems to indicate their nationality. Homer, it is true, makes no allusion to their presence at the siege of Troy; but if his Greeks must therefore be presumed to have had no knowledge of them, there is good reason to suppose that other nations of the period were perfectly accustomed to them, and employed them regularly. The archaeologists assert—and it looks as if they were quite right—that the earlier Egyptians carried images of bulls and crocodiles into battle; that each of the twelve tribes of Israel had a special ensign of its own; and that the faithful subjects of Semiramis adopted doves and pigeons as their token, in deference to their queen, whose name—surprising as it may seem—meant “dove.” They go on to tell us that, at later dates, Athens chose an owl for its public sign, as a compliment to Minerva; Corinth a winged horse, in memory of Pegasus and his fountain; Carthage a horse’s head, out of flattery to Neptune; Persia the sun, because its people worshipped fire; Rome an eagle, in order to

show courtesy to Jupiter. All these objects appear to have been carved in wood or metal; there is no proof of the existence of anything resembling modern flags—except, perhaps, in parts of Asia—until the Romans began to use fanions, somewhere about the time of Cæsar. These small signals had, however, no moral value, and possessed no national or public character; all the pride of Rome continued to be concentrated in the eagles; and it was not till Constantine gave a religious meaning to the Labarum that any floating banner really acquired a reputation. It should, however, be observed, that another sort of mark of nationality appears to have been a good deal applied amongst the less civilised populations of the epoch; they used to paint themselves, and so became, in fact, their own flag. The Ethiopians in Xerxes' army adorned their skins with vermilion and white plaster; the tribes of Germany inscribed various animals on their breasts; the North British carried their love of this class of patriotic symbols to such a point that they earned, by it the name of Picts; and there are curious inquirers who pretend that even so recently as the eighth century there were men in England who continued to be so proud of their illustrated bodies, that they steadfastly declined to wear any clothes at all, in order to exhibit themselves completely. These facts lead us, not unnaturally, to the thought that tattooing may possibly be the most ancient of all existing national devices, although the word itself, and the idea which it expresses, have only become known to Europeans since the discovery of the South Sea Islands. We need not carry further these indications of the origins of the subject; we can abandon the first forty-five centuries of the world's existence, and can begin our tale with

Clovis, who, according to some of the special authors, was the first Western sovereign to adopt a flag.

It is not, however, very easy to say what Clovis did; for the excellent reason that there is a bitter fight between learned critics as to whether he did anything at all. The wonder-loving section of the Continental writers about emblems, including Favyn, Père Anselme, Benéton, and even the modern M. Rey, tell us, as a matter of course, about which no discussion is possible, that Clovis, after his conversion, adopted the "chape de St Martin" as his standard. They do not all agree as to what the "chape" was, some asserting positively that it was the cloak of the famous saint of Tours; others, that it was the remaining half of the identical garment which he cut in two at Amiens in order to share it with a beggar; others, again, that it was no part of the vestments of the saint, but a regular proper flag belonging to his abbey. The latter group of authors go so far as to describe the banner, and to proclaim that it was blue and had three points. But another set of equally-convinced enthusiasts (whose opinion has been adopted by M. Sepet in his curious monograph of the Flag of France) urge that the "chape de St Martin" never was a real flag at all, and that it was not even a garment used as a flag; they argue that it was simply a relic of the saint which was carried in procession with the army in a box, as an encouragement to the troops. Legendary or real as the history may be, there is a widespread belief in France not only that the ensign of St Martin was the first banner of the Gallic nation, but that it was also the first flag ostensibly adopted in Western Europe; and, furthermore, that the word chapel is descended from "capella," which originally meant a little cloak,



but was also used to designate the oratory in which the "chape" was kept; and that chaplain also grew current from the same source, because the priests attached to the oratory of St Martin were known by that appellation. This is a question which may be left to etymological antiquaries to settle, if they can; it need not delay us here.

After Clovis, Dagobert took an eagle as his emblem; but, from his day, wild animals temporarily went out of fashion in Christianity, and were replaced by flowers, figures, crosses, flames, and saints, which began to disappear again when shields of arms were invented. It is pretended that, at this same time, the Germans used a serpent and a lion for their symbols; the Goths a lion, cock, and bear; the Danes three lions and a crow; the Burgundians a cat; and the Saxons a white horse.

It will, however, be as well to continue the story of the French flag, and to tell it completely, before any reference is made to the emblems of other countries. There are several reasons for adopting this order in the tale: the flag of France has had a career of curious variations; it has passed through grave adventures; its story has been written a good many times, and we consequently possess details with respect to it which, more or less, are wanting in the case of most other colours; its successive modifications serve as mark-points in the history of the French; finally, the special interest of actuality which attaches to it just now would justify us, even if no other motives existed, in assigning to it, for the moment, the foremost place in the list of European banners. Five months ago, the Comte de Chambord refused to become king of France, unless he could bring the white flag back with him: it seemed strange that

the destinies of a nation should be made dependent on the colour of a standard,—but so it was; France missed a possible opportunity of acquiring a definite form of government because its intended king would not let his subjects use the tricolour. This fact alone makes it well worth while to tell the legend of the two rival flags, and to tell it before we speak of the less exciting emblems of other nations.

We therefore go on to Charlemagne, and with him the modern history of bunting begins in earnest, for the first oriflamme appears. About this, at all events, no doubt is possible, for at Rome, in the Church of St John Lateran, there was a mosaic representing St Peter in the act of offering the pallium with his right hand to Leon III., and a banner with the left to Charlemagne. The latter wore a closed imperial crown, a moustache, and no beard; the banner is blue, with six red roses on it. A drawing of this mosaic (which exists no longer) is given by Montfaucon in his '*Monuments de la Monarchie Française.*' And this is not the only evidence we possess with reference to this ensign; here are four lines about it from the "*Chanson de Roland*:"—

"Montjoie, ils crient! Entre eux est  
Charlemagne;  
Geoffroy d'Anjou y porte l'Oriflamme,  
Fut de Saint Pierre, et avait nom Romaine;  
Mais de Montjoie son nom là prit échange."

This seems to tell us that this flag, which was first called "Romaine," apparently because it was given to Charlemagne in Rome, changed its name to Montjoie, a corruption of Mons Gaudii, which was a hill near Rome. So far the story is tolerably comprehensible; but it winds up with a grievous difficulty, for no one pretends to know the end of the first oriflamme,

or why it was suppressed and its place absorbed by the second oriflamme—the famous flag of St Denis. To account for this otherwise inexplicable difference, M. Sepet suggests—though he gives us no reason why—that the “*Romaine*” was identical with the standard of St Maurice, which Charlemagne carried in his wars against the Saracens of Spain, and which Hugues Capet sent afterwards as a present to King Athelstane. Whether this be true or not, St Peter’s gift is no more heard of.

St Denis was an abbey of the county of Vexin, a district outside Paris, stretching from the Epte to the Oise, and including Mantes, Magny, Chaumont, and Pontoise. The county was transferred to the crown in the reign of Philip I., and the king, having apparently no other flag which he liked better, adopted the banner of St Denis on becoming Comte du Vexin. It was solemnly raised for the first time in the year 1124, when Louis le Gros was going to fight the Emperor Henry V. From that moment the oriflamme of St Denis became the official standard of France, and was in all the battles of the kingdom down to Agincourt, after which it seems to have been used no more. There is considerable doubt as to what became of it. Some of the learned critics pretend that it was lost in Flanders; others have the courage to assert that it was still in existence in 1792, and was then borne by the regiment of M. de Vergnette. It is, however, probable that when it ceased to be employed, it was deposited at St Denis; for, in an inventory of the treasure of the abbey, made in 1504, it is spoken of as being there in a worn-out state; and Dom Felibian says that he saw it there in 1594, half-eaten by mites. It was a red silk flag; probably it bore no pattern or in-

scription; it seems also likely that it was cut into several points, and that its name of oriflamme was a consequence of its flame-shaped ends. And that is almost all which can be guessed about it.

But now we come to something much more interesting. While the oriflamme was still in all its glory, another flag appeared: the oriflamme was a banner of devotion, the new-comer was personal and political; the oriflamme was red, the other one was blue; the oriflamme was an accident, its rival was destined to become an institution; one was the flag of St Denis, the other grew into the flag of France. Under Louis VII. this blue ensign was carried respectfully behind the oriflamme; it was at Bouvines, it was at Acre; on the windows of the cathedral of Chartres, St Louis appears on horseback, his shield in one hand, this banner in the other. Throughout the 13th and 14th centuries it floated on every battle-field; it was at Crécy and at Poitiers. It was at first the “*bannière royale*,” then it was called the “*Bannière de France*,” it was the blue flag with the golden fleurs-de-lys.

The adventures and the transformations of this famous standard are difficult to trace with certainty; but its birthplace is still more difficult to define. Who can pretend to tell us the true origin of the fleurs-de-lys? Who can determine with precision why the kings of France adopted blue as the colour of their banner and their shield? We have the choice between so many genealogies for the fleur-de-lys, that it is really prudent not to attempt to decide between them. A certain Goropius tells us that France already used this famous emblem in the time of Noah, Japheth having received it direct from heaven for the express purpose of ornamenting the flag of Gaul. Less eager writers,



while still maintaining the celestial derivation of the symbol, assign a somewhat less distant date to its appearance upon earth, and content themselves with proclaiming that an angel brought it down to Clovis. A third group shakes its awful head and mutters, "It descended not to Clovis, but to St Denis." Then comes the unbelieving school, which argues that the fleur-de-lys was not a flower at all, but was simply an imitation of a lance-head. The partisans of this interpretation urge that the first sceptre of the Frank monarchs was a javelin, and that the point of this weapon passed as an ornament into their crown, their clothes, and finally, into their coat of arms. Next we find the theory that the fleurs-de-lys may be imitations of a bee, the reason being that about 300 little images having a faint resemblance to that useful insect were found in the tomb of Childeric, and were supposed, when first discovered, to have been sewn all over his mantle, and to have therefore been his emblem. Other explanations are, that the first arms of the Frank kings were toads, in memory of the marshy countries from which they came, and that by some curious process the toads grew into lilies; or that the soldiers of Clovis made for themselves crowns of lilies after the battle of Tolbiac, and that their leader consequently adopted the lily as his mark instead of the toads which he had so far borne. That the sovereigns of France did bear toads at one time is proved by many testimonies; but it is not easy to imagine how they could have become converted into a sign so widely different. One more legend is that the twelve first Louis signed their names as Löys, and that fleur-de-lys was simply a corruption of fleur-de-Löys. Finally, when we get to the flower itself—if really it was a flower—we find that

it may have been a lily, or a gladiolus, or an iris. About the blue the theories are simpler; the authors generally content themselves with statements that it was the colour of the Merovingians and of St Martin, and was therefore naturally chosen for the royal hue; some few of them, however, pretend that it was adopted in memory of the water in which the lilies grew.

In addition to all this uncertainty as to origin, there is also considerable difficulty as to the date at which this banner first appeared. There is no evidence of its existence prior to 1148, but it is then distinctly spoken of as having been carried by Louis VII. to the Crusade. Yet, whatever be its real antiquity, it may fairly be regarded as the primary royal flag of France, and as exhibiting the original arms and colour of the nation. The first alteration which occurred in its composition was the diminution of the number of fleurs-de-lys. Down to Charles VI. there was no limit to them—there were as many as the field could hold; from his time they were reduced to three. The next change was infinitely more important, for it seems to have been the starting-point of a series of progresses which gradually converted the blue flag into a white one. It appears—so far, at least, as the uncertain evidence enables us to arrive at an opinion—to have resulted from the transfer of the white cross which French soldiers habitually wore upon their breasts to the centre of the royal standard. The "*droite croix blanche*" had been for centuries a mark of France, just as the red cross of St George was the badge of England; but it does not appear to have been inscribed upon the blue ensign until the time of Charles VII.—that is to say, at the very date when the Maid of Orleans made her own white flag

so famous. The entire question is tangled and difficult to unravel; but the more serious authorities appear to agree that the sacred banner of Jeanne d'Arc, which she said she cherished as being worth forty times her sword, which she held aloft at Rheims when Charles VII. came there to be crowned, was the first white flag ever seen in the French armies; and it, let it be remembered, was an essentially religious emblem,—it was the banner of the Virgin Mary, of her colour, and bearing her image: it was not a royal symbol; there was no white in the king's banner until the cross crept into it about the middle of the fifteenth century. It would appear, moreover, that at first the cross was carried in the centre of the blue, and that its arms did not stretch to the edges—just as the cross of Switzerland is blazoned now. It was probably only by degrees that the four arms extended, and that the “*bannière de France*” became a straight white cross between four blue corners, with gold fleurs-de-lys upon each square of blue. At last, when Francis I. was king, a pure white flag was occasionally employed as the special royal sign; but it is not till we get to Henri Quatre that the blue really disappears, and that the *drapeau blanc* becomes the flag of the Maison de France. It came in with the first Bourbon; it has always been the Bourbon mark; but it is a very modern emblem, for it only saw the light towards the end of the sixteenth century.

The theory of the gradual conversion of the blue flag into a white one is defended, with many proofs and many arguments, by M. Sépet, himself an ardent Legitimist, who evidently would do the best to serve his cause; yet even he cannot carry the origin of the Bourbon flag more than three hundred years back. It is true that, as has just been said,

Francis I. sometimes used a “*coronnette blanche*,” but white did not become the accepted royal hue till Henri Quatre made it so. His flag was white—his scarf was white, his plume was white, his livery was white—white was the colour of the Royalists against the League. Under Louis XIII., the use of white grew on. The “*rose de ruban blanc*”—what we now call the white cockade—began to be worn on the hats of soldiers. The *cravates* of the flags were white. And yet, with all this, the old blue of France did not disappear. The *drapeau blanc* was military and royal, but not national; and the squadrons of the fleet preserved as their distinguishing emblems three ensigns which indicated the three successive transformations of the colours—blue, blue and white, and white. And—which is a far stronger proof—the white flag was rigorously reserved for war-ships. All merchant-vessels carried, according to the wording of the ordinance of Louis XIV., “the old flag of the French nation, which is, a white cross on a blue standard”—that is to say, the flag which intervened between the blue banner of St Louis and the white one of Henri Quatre.

The white flag, thus established, lasted for two centuries. For just two hundred years, from 1589, it was the royal standard. On the 13th of July 1789 appeared the first symptom of the rival which was to take its place, and to make the flag of France more glorious still. On that day, at the Hotel de Ville of Paris, the National Guard was constituted, and a cockade of red and blue (the colours of the capital and of the livery of its *échevins*) was assigned to it as a special badge. The next day the Bastille was taken. On the 17th the king came up from Versailles, went to



the Hotel de Ville, received the new cockade from the Mayor of Paris, and put it in his hat. Then Lafayette proposed to add the white, "in order to nationalise the ancient colour of France;" and so the tricolour was created by the adjunction of the royal white to the local red and blue of Paris. It may be worth observing that several kings of France had used red, white, and blue for the liveries of their servants; and the later Bourbons, including both Louis XVIII. and Charles X., employed those colours regularly for that purpose. But the tricoloured cockade in no way sprang from that accidental mixture. It was, as we have just shown, an amalgamation of the colours of rebellious Paris and of the beaten king.

The flag, however, did not at first follow the cockade; each of the sixty sections of the *Garde Nationale* of Paris had its own ensign: some had a red flag, some had white, some had blue, and some had various mixtures of red, white, and blue, with crosses, fleurs-de-lys, and caps of liberty. But, though there were hesitations about the flag, there were none whatever with reference to the new cockade; it spread rapidly through France, and became the special mark of the Revolution, in contradistinction to the white cockade which the "aristocrats" still wore. The white flag held on for some months in spite of this. At the *fête* of the federation in the Champ de Mars on 14th July 1790, nearly all the flags were white. It was not till the 22d of October of that year that the new colours were transplanted from the cockade to the flag of France by a vote of the *Constituante*. after a violent discussion which lasted for three days. But this first flag was red, white, and blue; it was not till 15th February 1794 that the Convention made the final

change, and instituted the present tricolour, blue, white, and red, the flag of the Consulate and the Empire—the first absolutely national emblem which France had ever possessed.

From all this it results that the white flag is essentially the Bourbon mark. Every Bourbon king in France has borne it as a royal, personal, and military standard; but it has never been employed as a national symbol in the secondary though important sense of citizen or mercantile usage. For that purpose, as we saw just now, blue with a white cross was, before the Revolution, the only legal ensign. Furthermore, at that time, each province and each seaport flew its own special colours; so that, really, the white flag was at no time the universal banner of the French nation. It is easy enough to understand that, individually, as a Bourbon prince, the Comte de Chambord should regard the *drapeau blanc* as an attribute of his royalty, and should refuse to separate himself from it; but if, in addition to its employment as his personal standard, he decides (as he seems to do, though he has not spoken clearly on the subject) to impose this one flag on France to the exclusion of all others, then, manifestly, he puts himself historically in the wrong. He is already as wrong as he can be in the political aspect of the question; but, leaving that consideration entirely aside, and limiting our view to this one point of the historically proved usages of the *drapeau blanc*, we are unable to conceive the grounds on which the Comte de Chambord can rest his apparent claim that, for the first time since the white ensign was invented, no other flag shall exist in France beside it. Here ends this agitated story for the moment; but before we travel on from France to other nations it will

be worth while to note that the *drapeau rouge*, to which the Communists of Europe have lately given a distinctive character, was not originally a revolutionary emblem. It was adopted by the *Constituante* simply as a signal of the proclamation of martial law; it was for this reason that Lafayette employed it for the first time in the Champ de Mars on 17th July 1791. Since then it has changed its meaning.

The stories of the colours of other countries are a good deal shorter and more simple than the tale of the flag of France; but still, almost every ensign has some sort of history. The flags of Belgium and of the new German Confederation sprang into existence all complete, and were at once officially adopted and set forth in 1831 and 1866, in the first Constitution of their respective countries. But these two cases are exceptions, so far, at least, as the more important nations are concerned; the other examples of direct creation of a standard which have been recently supplied by Mexico, by some of the American Republics, and by the Danubian Principalities, do not present general interest enough to be worth quoting here. The rule amongst European nations is, that flags have slowly grown, with more or less of change and hesitation, into their actual form. In our own case, for instance, the red banner with the golden leopards, and the white standard with the square red cross, which waved so long on all our battle-fields, gave way at last to the first Union Jack, comprising the crosses of St Andrew and St George. This symbol was constituted in 1606 by a proclamation of James I., and grew later on into its present shape by the addition of St Patrick's cross for Ireland. The Stars and Stripes, again, modern though they be, were not made all at once. "On the

1st of January 1776," as Mr Bancroft tells us in his history, "the tricoloured American banner, not yet spangled with stars, but showing thirteen stripes of alternate red and white in the field, and the united red and white crosses of St George and St Andrew on a blue ground in the corner, was unfurled" at Boston. It was not till eighteen months after this first attempt that the badge of England disappeared from the new ensign. On 14th June 1777 the crosses were struck out; on that day Congress "resolved that the flag of the thirteen United States should be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation." The heraldry was original, but the idea was excellent, and it has grown a good deal since by the addition of other stars to the "constellation." The history of the flag of Holland is somewhat more complicated. That flag was the first tricolour invented, and it has been pretended that its horizontal orange, white, and blue were suggested by Henry IV. of France, who, according to the legend, was requested by the Dutch to choose their colours for them when they became independent; but in Jonge's Note on the *Nederlandsche Vlag* it is proved by the evidence of the tapestries of Middleburg, which were executed in 1591, and depicted battles fought twenty years before, that this flag existed and was in use when the Béarnais was still almost a boy. It may be that the blue and white was copied from the French out of gratitude for the goodwill which Henry III. showed to the struggling United Provinces; but Jonge denies even that, and will have it that the Nassau colours were not orange only, but orange, white, and blue: whence came, he says, the old cry of Holland, "*Oranje*



boven!" (orange above), as a reference to the position of the orange in the ensign. And yet this famous Nassau orange (the name of which came, after all, from a little principality in France) was replaced by red for some cause, and at some date unknown, before the end of the seventeenth century. Even William, when he came to England in 1688, wore above his own standard a pennant of red, white, and blue.

Here we may open a parenthesis, and draw attention to the fact that this first tricolour has been largely imitated. The Dutch pattern has been copied, in various colours, and with or without charges in the field, by France, Belgium, Italy, Mecklenburg, Roumania, Servia, and the German Confederation, and by Russia too, for its merchant-vessels; while, in the two Americas, it has been adopted by the majority of the Governments south of the United States. Of the four essential types into which navy ensigns may be divided—arms, crosses, stripes, and tricolours—arms are blazoned by Prussia, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and Brazil; crosses are employed by Russia, England, Denmark, Sweden, Oldenburg, and Norway; stripes by a very few; while tricolours are now flown by no less than nineteen several states. And yet, with all this multiplicity of adoption, and with all their varied contrasts, the tricolours have never become grand flags to look at. That white standards should be dull was to have been expected, and the two of them which the Bourbons carried, in France and Naples, proved what a cheerless colour white is for a banner; but it might have been supposed that red, white, and blue, especially when imperially sprinkled with golden bees, and with the crown and eagle in the centre, would make a grand effect. And yet those Napo-

leonic colours faded almost into dullness beside the imperial and royal yellow flag of Austria, with its double-headed thrice-crowned sable eagle, charged with shields of arms and with the collar of the Golden Fleece, surrounded by its triangulated border of red, yellow, white, and black. And even this again turns pale when it is compared to the royal standard of the King of Prussia, which is by far the noblest flag that flies. Nothing that silk or bunting has ever shown, can approach the glory of the iron cross on the red-purple field, all covered with black eagles and golden crowns, illuminated by the white edges of the cross, and by the central white escutcheon. It really is superb; and such of us as saw it waving over the Prefecture at Versailles will well remember how the splendour of its aspect looked worthy of the grandeur of its career.

Most other flags are in the happy state of having no history that is worth telling; and even if they had, it would not be possible to narrate here the origin of each one of them, for there are so many that the mere enumeration would occupy several pages. The French 'Encyclopédie de la Marine' describes 237 of them as being in existence in 1787 in the maritime states of Europe; and though the composition of the list has radically changed since then, the total number in all the world is now vastly larger. Including all the various national and official sorts—royal standards, naval and military colours, and commercial, local, and special flags, but not comprising signals, or any private or unauthorised inventions—there exist at present more than 1100 different ensigns. This addition is, however, necessarily below the reality, for it cannot be supposed that a really complete catalogue exists anywhere; there must be many

flags which remain unknown to the compilers, however careful they may be; and, furthermore, it does not contain any of the emblematic colours. The standard of the prophet (though it still exists), the corsair's hand and sabre on a red ground, the pirate's black, and even the yellow of quarantine, and the white of truce and peace, are all omitted from it. The increase which it shows during the present century has evidently been produced by the rapid multiplication of new nations in America and Asia. It is in no degree a consequence of any particular flag-inventing proclivity of our epoch; on the contrary, the tendency is manifestly towards diminution and unification of each nation's symbols. Local flags (that is, flags of provinces and towns) are falling out of fashion everywhere; and even the old distinction between the naval and commercial colours of each country is so rapidly disappearing, that at this moment more than two-thirds of the maritime states employ the same flag for both purposes. Some day, perhaps, the world will get on further still, and, imitating the excellent example which, in this one respect, France now offers us, will adopt, throughout the universe, one single ensign for all the needs of each separate state. In this way the complications of the subject would disappear, and it would cease to be impossible to distinguish without a guide-book between the various flags which fly.

After flags, the most striking symbols of a nation are those which we find on its shield of arms; and here, without going into heraldry, there is a fresh field of curious vanities to explore. The history of the double-headed eagle, for example, adds a wide page to the tale of pride; and though its earlier details are not quite distinct, we know

enough about it to be able to follow its main developments. Some people pretend that Constantine was the first to double the Roman bird, and that he did so because his empire had grown into two parts, while still forming one single body. Others argue that this theory is unfounded, because a two-skulled eagle was depicted on the Antonine column, which was put up a hundred years before Constantine was born. Others again assert that, at whatever date the change was made in the Western or Eastern Empire, the old Roman symbol did not definitely acquire a second head in Germany until Sigismund put it on in the fifteenth century. The single-headed bird seems to have been taken up by Charlemagne as his imperial emblem when he was crowned at Rome; but it made no appearance on the German flag until the time of Otho II., although it was reproduced meanwhile on the seals of the Palatines and Margraves, and finally on the coin. It was still in use in 1356, for the seal of the Golden Bull bears a one-beaked bird, though Louis of Bavaria had temporarily employed a double eagle in 1325. Wenceslos copied Louis in 1378, and put two heads upon his seal as "a sign of majesty;" but it was not, as has just been said, till the time of Sigismund (who was elected emperor in 1410) that the double bird became the distinctive sign of the German Empire.

Russia also bears a double-headed eagle; it was first adopted by Ivan Wassiliwitch about the year 1500, on the occasion of his marriage with a niece of the last Emperor of Constantinople, in order to thereby demonstrate that he claimed to have become the representative of the extinct Greek emperors. The German and the Russian bird present certain differences of aspect: their



shapes are not quite alike; and furthermore, at Vienna the beak, claws, and tongue are gilt, while at Petersburg they are red.

The Prussian eagle is now the only unchanged descendant of the original Roman emblem. Prussia, however, did not get it as an imperial token, as Austria and Russia pretend to hold it; she obtained it simply by absorption from the Teutonic order, which received it from Frederick II., who, as a testimony of his admiration of the fighting qualities of the brotherhood, permitted it to bear his arms. But in the Emperor Frederick's time, as we have just seen, the German eagle had but a single head: it was in that form, therefore, that the order took it; so that, when Sigismund altered the imperial bird by making it look left as well as right, the original single beak remained, thenceforth, the sole property of the Teutonic knights. It passed on, with their black and white, to the Duchy of Prussia, when Albert of Brandenburg, the last Grand-Master, turned Protestant, and profited by the opportunity to convert the dominions of the order into a property for himself. In 1618 the Duchy was conveyed by marriage to the electoral branch of Brandenburg, which thus acquired the Black Eagle and the Teutonic colours. The Brandenburg eagle, as it is now called—though, as this story shows, the name is a total error—has golden claws and beak, and a red tongue; and it is the only one of the three eagles which we are here describing which is employed on the ordinary flags of the country to which it belongs. It is perhaps the oldest emblem which exists—not, of course, in its Prussian sense and use, but in its history and origin; for it goes straight back, possibly without a change of shape or colour, to the Crusades, and thence on again to

Rome. Even the Spanish arms, which are undoubtedly very ancient, cannot show such an antiquity as this. Their red and yellow, which are carried upon the flag as well, come from the old shields of Castille and Arragon, both of which bore gules and or; while the castle and the lion of Castille and Leon are perhaps the earliest examples of what we call “canting arms,” and the French *armes parlantes*. All this dates probably from the beginning of the 13th century, and has remained unaltered since. As for the reason of it, Ocampo tells us that Alphonso the Noble, King of Castille, adopted in 1212 a castle for his arms, in memory of the Castle of Ferrail, which he took from the Moors. Legend says, too, that the Count of Barcelona, who became King of Arragon, took the four red bars, because, on a battle-field, Charles the Bald of France laid four blood-stained fingers on his golden shield.

Our own lions formed, as leopards, the arms of Normandy, and were imported by the Conqueror. There were, however, only two of them in his time, and there is doubt as to when the third was added; some authors arguing that it was put on by Henry II., others, that Richard Cœur de Lion gave it to us, and that he simultaneously changed the leopards into lions. The origin of the white cross of Savoy is unknown: the story which explained it by the presence of Amadeus the Fifth at the siege of Rhodes, and by his consequent supposed adoption of the badge of the Hospitalers, is discredited by all modern historians; for the double reason that Amadeus never went to Rhodes, and that the house of Savoy bore the white cross long before the siege took place. The quintuple red cross of Jerusalem, forming what French heralds call a *croix recroisetée*,

which is now worn as the star of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, has a clearer source ; Godefroy de Bouillon assumed it as his mark when he was proclaimed King of the Holy City in 1099. The red shield and silver cross of Switzerland came from Schwytz, which gave not only its name but its emblem to the Confederation on its foundation in 1315. The men of Schwytz had either kept the cross in memory of the Crusades, or, as Justinger asserts, had received it specially from the emperor during a raid they made in Burgundy. Of the four Austrian colours, the black and yellow represent the Empire, or rather the sable of the eagle and the golden shield ; while the red and white are the old Austrian colours proper, as distinguished from those of Hapsburg and Lorraine. It should, however, be observed, that there is a legend which explains the black and yellow in another way : it is pretended that Frederick Barbarossa noticed one day at a ceremony at Mayence that the flooring of the hall was painted black and gold, admired the combination, and declared that he adopted it as the imperial badge.

And so, if it were not wearisome, we might go on for half an hour. It will, however, be more amusing to abandon both history and legend for a few seconds, and to quote a little from the imagination of an enthusiast. Here is an extract from the opinions of Père Anselme, who wrote in 1663 : he explains the origin of arms without much care for fact, but he is very rich in sentiment. He tells us that "the Kings of Scotland, Bohemia, Leon, and Norway bear lions in their arms in order to indicate the nobility of their anger. The Kings of Sweden and Media bear crowns and diadems to express their power. England and Denmark have

leopards, as a sign of the variety of their warlike passions. The hearts which appear on the shield of Denmark represent the love of the people for the prince. The Ottomans have taken crescents, as a symbol of the ambition of their conquests. The King of India has bezants, to show that he possesses mines of gold and silver ; and the King of Cathay has taken heads of Moors, in order to astonish foreigners." This is ingenious, and it really is a pity that it is not true, for national coats of arms would become infinitely more interesting if we could but attribute their birth to such essentially moral causes as the Père Anselme enumerates. His explanation of the crescent is not more remarkable than his other statements ; but it is the only one which it is worth while to notice, for the reason that actual popular opinion agrees with his idea that the crescent really is a purely Ottoman symbol. This is wrong. The crescent was the special mark of Constantinople ; it lasted there for centuries, as a local and thoroughly Christian emblem. The Turks found it there, and adopted it ; but they no more invented it than Prussia invented the Black Eagle. Even now, at Moscow, and in other Russian towns, the crescent is to be seen on churches with the cross above it, the object of their union being to signify the Byzantine origin of the Russian faith. The antithesis of the Crescent and the Cross is therefore altogether an illusion ; there is no original hostility between them : the supposed contrast of their meanings has grown up by habit during the last four hundred years, but it has no foundation in the genealogy of the crescent.

Some subjects have borne arms which were grander than those of the sovereign who bestowed them. What could be more superb, for in-



stance, than the shield which Ferdinand granted to Columbus—the arms of Castille and Leon, and a blue sea with silver islands, with the motto, “*Por Castilla y por Leon nuevo mundo Hallo Colomb*”! The Chateaubriands bear the fleur-de-llys, which was given to them by St Louis, with the magnificent device, “*Mon sang teint les bannières de France.*” The Montmorencys, too, have a brilliant coat: they changed their white cross into a red one in memory of the blood shed by Matthieu the First at the battle of Bouvines, and added sixteen gold eaglets in memory of the sixteen flags he took on the same occasion. Blazonries like these serve as veritable marks in history: it is true that they are not international in their character or effect; but although they are only personal attributes, they possess a grandeur which entitles them to be mentioned amongst the symbols of the countries to which their bearers have belonged.

From arms we get to badges, which may be taken to include scarfs, liveries, uniforms, cockades, and all other analogous distinctive tokens. Even “*Sublime Porte*” may be regarded as a badge, though it has ceased to be a material object, and exists now only as a name. When it was an object, it was a very curious one. Mostadhem, the last Caliph of the Abassides, put a piece of the famous black stone of Mecca into the gate of his palace at Bagdad (it is worth observing that, according to true believers, this stone was white at first, but turned black from the influence of the sins of men). The gate consequently became a shrine of veneration, and, by degrees, the entire palace, regarded as the seat of authority, came to be known under the name of its “*Sublime Gate.*” Other Governments than that of Turkey have

been similarly designated by the appellation of the sovereign's residence; the Courts of the Tuileries, of St James's, of the Escorial, were examples of them. State seals form another class of badge; but symbols of all these descriptions strike us much less than the ordinary visible signs amongst which we live. Of these latter, uniforms are perhaps the most conspicuous; but they are so well known, and are such a matter of mere tailoring, that it would be a waste of time to say anything here about them, although they do aid to constitute a prodigious mass of individual vanity. Liveries have ceased to be brilliant or universal, but they were the starting-point of uniforms, and are interesting as historic emblems. Unfortunately they have been so perpetually changed, that they have no longer any symbolic value; in their actual state they represent nothing but the nineteenth-century idea of servants' dress, and have altogether lost their original party significance. Clan tartans are now the only remaining example of the old use of liveries, of the time when all the members and retainers of great families wore the colours of their chief. Cockades, again, though they still generally preserve in European countries a distinctive aspect of nationality, have similarly changed their meaning. They continue, it is true, to be worn in certain Continental armies; but they too are generally regarded as a mere detail of servants' clothes. And yet they have a special place in history; for just as liveries were replaced by scarves in battle, so scarves were replaced again by cockades, in order to help to distinguish hostile armies during the infancy of uniforms. They first appeared in the early part of the seventeenth century, when a few of them were worn in France; but the tuft of grass which

Marlborough put upon his soldiers' hats was the earliest military cockade which was employed on a large scale; for though cockades continued to be worn occasionally as a party mark from the commencement of the eighteenth century, it does not appear that they became general in European armies until the war of the Austrian succession (1740-1748). At that time they were knots of ribbon; sometimes, even, they were bunches of paper; and they were not invariably of the national colour, for the French cockade appears to have been white and green in 1756, and not to have become pure white, by royal ordinance, till 1767. From this latter date cockades became universal; but a writer in the 'Conversations Lexicon' asserts that they did not really take root in Germany until 1813, when, in addition to the separate cockade adopted by each country, the so-called national cockade of Germany—black, red, and gold—was first invented. This badge, which was essentially political, was prohibited by the Diet in 1832; but it came up again in 1848, when it was worn even by the army. It died out in 1850. The wearing of cockades by nobody but the servants of persons who hold the Sovereign's commission is a purely British practice; throughout the Continent, the rule (if indeed there be any rule at all) is that the national cockade is borne only by the servants of great dignitaries; but our black Hanoverian cockade (luckily it is not English) has been appropriated by almost everybody in France during the last twenty years, and is coming into use elsewhere as a natural ornament of a footman's hat, without the slightest reference to the master's place in life. After all, this does not matter much, for the whole principle of badges is vanishing

from our manners and our customs. We are a long way now from the paper cross of St Bartholomew, from the corn-stalks of the Mazarinists during the Fronde, from the two parties of the Caps and Hats in the Swedish Diet in 1788, from the scarfs of the Armagnacs, and the cross of the Burgundians. All these marks were evidences of a way of life which seems to have disappeared; and even if similar causes were to occur again, it is scarcely likely that badges would be revived by them. In the days of badges there were no policemen, and standing armies had not grown into normal institutions; soldiers and policemen wear badges for us now, so the public does without them, except when its small vanities are satisfied by maintaining them.

The shape of armorial shields is another means of indicating nationality. Nearly every great people has its own special form of *écusson* for men, but all nations have agreed in assigning lozenges to women; the reason being, according to the Legitimists of France, that, as the Gospel says of lilies that "they toil not, neither do they *spin*," and as spinning is a special attribute of women, it follows not only that the wearer of the lilies cannot be a woman, but also, that women should bear arms in a shield shaped like a distaff. The first of these two conclusions is not exactly logical, for the Salic law is certainly more ancient than the French lilies; but it supplies an excellent and diverting example of the facility with which words, facts, or figures, whatever be their nature, can be made to serve a special cause. The second argument is still more droll, for its result is to deduce female heraldry from the teaching of the Bible; we need not go back quite so far, and can con-



tent ourselves with the explanation that lozenges represent a distaff, because that instrument was the special attribute of women in the early feudal times when arms were first invented.

Mottoes, particularly when they assume a special form, like the F.E.R.T. of Savoy, or the A.E.I.O.U. of Austria, must certainly be classed amongst the lesser emblems of nations. No one knows what the former example means, for the old interpretation, "*Fortitudo ejus Rhodum tenuit*," is now abandoned; but the latter may be done freely into English by "*Austria's Empire Is Over Universe*." France has never possessed a national device, though her kings have borne a variety of personal mottoes, of which the "*Nec pluribus impar*" of Louis XIV. was the latest. And England is in an analogous position, for "*Dieu et mon droit*" is purely royal, and belongs in no way to the country. The Prussians, on the contrary, have a really national phrase in "*Mitt Gott für König und Vaterland*;" but even that dates only from the great rising in 1813. It may be said that to some small extent mottoes replaced war-cries, when the latter were driven out by gunpowder; for it was not till eager people could no longer shout their sentiments that they began to write or print them. And yet scarcely any battle-cries were really national; excepting, perhaps, St George for England, and Santiago for Spain: nearly all the others were personal to each chieftain and his men. For example, the Duke of Lorraine cried, "*Lorraine au riche duc*;" the men of Hainaut, "*Hainaut au noble Comte*;" the Auvergnats, "*Clermont au Dauphin d'Auvergne*;" the Coucys cried, "*Coucy à la merveille*;" the Venetians, "*Marco, Marco*;" the Normands, "*Rouen*;" the Gascons, "*Bordeaux*;" the

Flemings, "*Ghent*;" and we all know who cried "*Douglas, Douglas*." In Lorraine there was a custom of the strangest kind; all gentlemen who carried in their arms a cross cried "*Prény*;" all who bore a bar cried "*Couvert*;" and all who had rings cried "*Loupy*." Of all the innumerable shouts which history and tradition have handed down to us, there was but one, or rather two at once, which made a real mark — the double cry of the fight at Weinsberg in 1140, the cry which gave their names to Guelph and Ghibelline, "*Hie Waiblingen*" — "*Hie Welf*." And yet, notwithstanding their want of influence on history, war-cries have a sort of literature of their own; they have been written about, and have been divided, like other subjects, into categories. There were cries of invocation, like "*Dieu aide*," "*Notre Dame*," or "*Montjoie*;" cries of resolution, like the "*Dieu le veut*" of the Crusaders; cries of exhortation, like "*A la rescousse*," "*Montois*," and "*Au plus dru*;" cries of defiance, like the arrogant exclamation, "*Place à la bannière*;" and cries of terror, like "*Au feu*" or "*Chevaliers peuvent*." Whether the modern "*Hoch*" and the ancient "*Hurrah*" are still to be considered as war-cries is a matter of individual opinion; but when the Germans evacuated Paris on that bright March morning three years ago, and, in the intoxication of abundant victory, madly roared out those two echoing words as they passed beneath the Arch of Triumph, it certainly did seem to the half-dozen lookers-on that the fierce shout from those forty thousand throats well deserved the name of *Kriegsgeschrei*. If so, war-cries still continue to form part of the vanities of nations in their most aggressive and defiant form.

Crowns are emblems of another class ; many of them have possessed a distinctly marked national character, and, even now, each country has a special shape of crown for its sovereign's use. The critics of the question go deeply into the discussion whether Nero was the first Roman monarch to wear a radiated crown, or whether his diadem was of the same shape as that of the Armenian and Syrian kings, who, because they claimed direct descent from Apollo, wore an imitation of the rays of the sun. The modern notion of a crown seems to date from Charlemagne, who took what we now call an imperial closed crown when he was at Rome. There is no sign of this sort of shape on any of the seals anterior to him, but from his time it came generally into use. The German emperors wore it in the tenth century, and William the Conqueror adopted it as soon as he became king of England. Du Cange says that, in the middle ages, the Western emperors received a triple crown, "silver in Germany, iron in Italy, and gold in sundry places"—the latter phrase meant Rome. The German crown possessed two points, which were surmounted by a diadem, a ball, and a cross of pearls ; the cross indicated the guardianship of Christianity, the diadem the empire, and the two points the seigneuries of Denmark and Bohemia. The crown of England has four fleurs-de-lys, representing the old claims on France ; and four Maltese crosses, indicative of that amusing appellation, Defender of the Faith. The famous Lombard crown was originally all gold, like most other crowns ; but when Agilulph received it in 590, his wife, Theodolinda of Bavaria, put an iron ring inside to make it stronger, and that is why it became known as the iron crown. The legend is that the ring was made of one of the nails of the true cross,

which was given to Theodolinda by Gregory the Great. The crown itself is now preserved at Vienna. In France the closed crown came into fashion more slowly than elsewhere. Some of the authorities pretend that Charles VIII. was the first French king to wear one, and that he adopted it when he took the quality of Emperor of the East in 1495 ; but this looks doubtful, for there are coins of Louis XII., his immediate successor, on which the crown is open. It is only from Francis I. that the closed crown appears to have been regularly worn. Of all crowns, however, the Papal tiara is that which has the most curious history. The Roman bishops had at first a mitre, like other prelates, and the legend is that they converted it into a regal symbol, because Clovis, after his conversion, sent on to Pope Symmachus a crown which he had himself received from the Emperor Anastasius. This crown, according to this theory, was the first owned at Rome, and was known afterwards at Papal coronations by the name of *Regnum Mundi*. Cicognera says, however, that Alexander III. was the first Pope to wear a crown, and that he added it to his mitre as a sign of sovereignty. Boniface VIII., who died in 1303, is supposed to have added a second crown, to indicate the union of the spiritual and temporal power ; and Urban V. is said to have put on the third as a symbol of the government of the Holy See over the Church suffering, militant, and triumphant. There are, however, other explanations of the meaning of the triple crown ; one is, that it represents the Pope as sovereign sacrificer, grand judge, and sole legislator of Christianity ; another, that it implies triple royalty—spiritual over souls, temporal over the Roman States, and mixed over all kings ; a third, that it indicates the threefold authority of the



Holy Father as chief of the Church, as Bishop of Rome, and as temporal sovereign. Whatever doubts there may be as to this interpretation, it is at all events quite evident that, as the mitre implies spiritual power, so does the tiara imply material power. When the Pope is going to officiate pontifically, he wears the tiara as he advances to the altar, but there he takes it off and puts on his mitre. The treasury of the Vatican includes seven or eight tiaras, the last of which was given by the Queen of Spain in 1855; its three crowns are all alike; it weighs only 3 lb., and it cost £12,000. Napoleon had one made for Pius VII. after the Concordat; its three crowns are all different from each other; it weighs 8 lb.; it cost £8800. All these details are quite intelligible; but it is less easy to comprehend why, or how, the Papal crown became possessed of the name *Tiara*, which was the denomination given by Herodotus to the cap of the King of Persia. There is a total want of harmonious etymology in this origin.

National airs necessarily come last in the catalogue of symbols, because they are so miserably modern. The oldest of them—"God save the Queen"—has not a hundred and fifty years behind it. It was first sung in 1740; and it may be added that it is now proved to have been composed by Dr Carey, and not by Dr Bull. The various *Ranz des Vaches* are much more ancient, it is true; but they cannot reasonably be included in the same category of national expressions as the Russian or English hymns. France has never had a national air at all. The "*Chant du Départ*" and the "*Marseillaise*" are warlike and Republican, not national. "*Partant pour la Syrie*" was a baby song, taught principally to parrots. "*Vive Henri Quatre*" was popular, not official. A nation,

indeed, could scarcely publicly adopt such rhymes as these:—

"Vive Henri Quatre !  
Vive le roi vaillant !  
Qui sait boire et se battre,  
Et être vert-galant."

A French writer says of this once famous quatrain, "*Il est une image du caractère Français; il est vif, égrillard, aussi peu solennel que possible, et il rend à merveille la fidélité monarchique de nos pères.*" This may be; but anyhow, there is nothing national in such words as these. Even in that German land where love of country is so deep, where convictions are so strong, where duties are so resolutely (though so disagreeably) discharged, there is no universally accepted home-made air. There are patriotic chants in any quantity. "*Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland,*" the "*Wacht am Rhein,*" "*Hurrah, Germania!*" and all the crowd of *Volkslieder*, are there, to prove the fertility of the Teutonic soul; but these songs are not national in the real symbolic sense. They all are furiously patriotic, which is natural, for nations are supposed to be composed of patriots; but not one of these purely German chants has the official character which alone gives an emblematic value to a song. Furthermore, the one real public hymn of Northern Germany, the "*Heil dir im Siegerkranz,*" is sung to the English music of "*God save the Queen;*" and that is why it so strangely happens that, notwithstanding her home enthusiasm, Germany has no truly national air of her own. "*Yankee Doodle*" and the "*Star-spangled Banner*" may berigorously American, but they scarcely convey the notion of a people's prayer; and the other more or less local melodies which bands play, all about the world, on State occasions, are in pretty much the same condition. All this seems to indicate that our last attempt at

creating another symbol, our idea of putting nationality into music, has not been worked out brilliantly thus far. It is a pretty fancy; and when, as in our own case and in that of Russia, it really attains success, it constitutes a heart-inspiring addition to the stock of emblems; but as it may be taken to have failed at least nine times out of ten, it is to be regretted that States do not put up their hymns to public competition, and by that means make a new and healthier selection.

The other emblems which nations use may just as well be left as they now stand; not because they are quite perfect, but because they are, at all events, about good enough for the work they have to do. It would be easy to suggest all sorts of changes in them, but it does not follow that any real improvement would follow from those changes; while, on the other hand, they would have the unsatisfactory effect of modernising ancient customs, and of destroying what is best and truest in our various symbols—their old associations. The wisest plan will be to leave them for the present as they are, excepting always such of them as necessarily fluctuate with fashion. In the present condition of the world, coats of arms and flags and crowns may advantageously remain in the shape they originally assumed; but pigtailed, wigs, and stocks would be as out of place in the uniforms of to-day as the horse-pistols of last century in a combat of artillery at 5000 yards. And this last consideration leads us to other thoughts. Judging from past experience, the smart coats which warriors wear, and which are identified in every country with the national idea of force, will go on changing, not only as a mere result of varying taste in dress, but also as a consequence of the development of weapons. The time may come when the token which we now call

"uniform" will disappear altogether; when, after passing through an intermediate stage of cuirassed armies, in which regiments, like ships, will be sheathed in six-inch plates, the battles of the world will be fought, at ranges of several degrees of longitude, by the scientific employment of the forces of nature. If ever this occurs, the soldiers of the future will doubtless be enclosed in laboratory bottles, and be surrounded by opaque vapours; generals will wear diving-dresses, and carry safety-lamps into action; while reconnaissances will be made by spectrum analysis. The effects of such a change as this would not be limited to the mere suppression of variegated coats and trousers; they could scarcely fail to simultaneously extend to other details too. Under such conditions of belligerence all actual emblems would lose their value; nations would probably discard them, and adopt, instead, devices more in harmony with the new methods which each of them would then employ in war. France, for instance, might give up the tricolour and adopt "portable democratised earthquakes" as her badge; England might abandon the ugly Union-Jack, and send her troops to fight beneath an oriflamme of "chemistry and dynamics;" Russia would replace the Byzantine eagle by "explosive ice;" while Italy would put "utilised volcanoes" in the place of the white cross of Savoy. United Germany, on the contrary, would continue to employ the practical but touching motto which she has recently adopted, "Blood and iron:" in this respect, as in so many others, she is far away ahead of her contemporaries, and is showing them the way to the mottoes of the future. For the moment this view of coming emblems may seem exaggerated; but science is progressing very fast, and some day,



perhaps, a good deal more than even this may come to pass.

If so, it is not unlikely that our successors will look back with a sort of envy to what, in their time, will be geologically known as the "flag-period" of the earth's existence. The fossilised relics of the happy generations which went to war with gunpowder will be preserved in the museums of the future side by side with the shreds which may then remain of their standards, their coats of arms, their liveries, their cockades. Fathers will take their children on Sunday afternoons (unless at that period the world employs a chemical substitute for Sunday) to gaze with curious sympathy on the skulls and thigh-bones of the simple races which used breech-loaders for weapons and coloured stuffs for emblems. In the then state of destructive inventivity our

epoch will be regarded as a golden age of peace, ignorance, and love, and our ensigns and other symbols will come in for a just proportion of the admiration which our retrospective innocuity will provoke. Professors of archæology will teach their pupils that the Prussian Eagle was an accepted sign of gentleness and maiden diffidence; that the Stars and Stripes stood universally for bashful modesty; and that the British Lion was a type of self-sacrificing unselfishness. We really ought to be very proud to have such a future before us: we do not suspect that it is waiting for us (we know ourselves too well for that); but if really it comes to pass, our shades will look on approvingly, and will murmur to each other, "Posterity is right; we always said our flags were full of noble meaning."

#### DATES AND DATES.

"Fable has not been a favourite form of composition with modern poets."

—*The Athenæum*, 14th February 1874.

[OUR readers will owe us a share of their gratitude for having been instrumental in calling forth from Lord Lytton the following able and amusing protest against the strictures in our own pages, as well as those of some of our contemporaries, on his novel and original (if he will permit us to employ such a word) adaptation of the Fabulist's most ancient art. It is worth a critic's while to indulge in objections which call forth such replies. We might, perhaps, were we captious, take exception to some points in the parallel; but as we feel sure, for one thing, that the lapse of time must be long indeed which will make Lord Lytton's dates dry, we accept them from his hands, fresh and dewy, with a pleasure unmixed with any carplings. The baskets of Æsop are full; we ask no better than to have other baskets of modern twine, but classic form, heaped high with fragrant fruit—more delicately flavoured, more poetically surrounded, more sweet and melting in the mouth, clusters of pure pleasure, apples of delight—instead of the food-fruit, the daily bread disguised in golden rind and russet husk, which comes to us from the sententious East.]

#### I.

DATES! how we schoolboys loved them! Dates,  
Not such as those Kenealy hates;  
Nor dates of chronologic things,  
Laws, battles, and the deaths of kings;

O'er which, alas ! with aching brains,  
Our masters made us spend such pains !  
But those the grocers' shops supply,  
Whose golden skins, if somewhat dry,  
Have in them hearts still full of honey ;  
On which we spent our pocket-money.

## II.

Not one of all our youthful band  
But long'd to see the mystic land,  
Of whose enchantments manifold  
Our loved Arabian stories told,  
Where grew, 'twas said, in sunburnt strength  
The golden fruit which here, at length,  
The commerce of the East and West  
Had, for our special sakes, comprest  
In clammy pennyworths of joy.

## III.

One, I remember well—a boy  
Somewhat the eldest of us all,  
Whom we pert youngsters used to call  
Cato the Censor (heaven save him !  
Jack was the name his parents gave him),  
A worthy lad, without a vice,  
And conscientiously precise.  
'Twas for the Navy, as we knew  
When first he join'd our merry crew,  
That Jack was destined. That career  
Begins in boyhood. One sad year,  
With sighs of boyish envy, we  
Bid Jack good-bye. He went to sea.  
The man-of-war on which he found  
His sea-legs was for Egypt bound.  
And when the ship's cook went ashore,  
Jack, mindful of the joys of yore,  
Besought the cook to bring him back  
A good supply of dates.

## IV.

Poor Jack !

Conceive with what dismay'd surprise,  
Fresh dates, as plump as plums he eyes,  
When back the ship's cook came with these,  
Dewy and dripping from the trees.

## V.

"What are these things ?" in wrath began  
The shock'd Catonian midshipman.



"I ask'd for dates. These are not dates.  
Dates should be dry as candied cates,  
And press'd, and squeez'd, and closely pack'd  
In compass small, with care exact.  
These fruits are fresh. Such freshness suits  
Mere common ordinary fruits,  
Cherries and currants. But things rare,  
Old, famous, and remote, should bear  
Upon their outward form the sign  
And impress of their origin.  
In short," he added, waxing hot,  
"Dates should be all that these are not."

## VI.

Thus Jack, who judged of things by rule,  
From reminiscences of school,  
Wrote to his friends, disconsolate,  
That not a single genuine date  
Was left in Egypt. "Sad!" he said,  
"The age of genuine dates is dead."

## MORAL.

"Revere the ancients and their art!"  
Revere them? Ay, with all my heart.  
What they have done will ne'er again  
Be done so well. But why disdain  
All fruit that's fresh from living trees,  
Even tho' inferior far to these  
Choice classic dainties, time hath prest  
And pack'd with care, since even their best  
Time-ripen'd sweets were raw one day?  
With grateful hearts (we fain would say)  
Due honour to the ancients give:  
But to us moderns leave to live.

LYTTON.

PARIS, 25th February 1874.

## THE BUDGET AND THE INCOME-TAX.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE'S first financial statement was worthy of his reputation. The most striking circumstance connected with it is, that the surplus shadowed forth by Mr Gladstone in his Greenwich address, and which was received at the time with so much incredulity, turns out to have been well within the mark. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is the happy or unhappy possessor, as the case may be, of a surplus of more than six millions of money. It is more than ever unaccountable that, with the foreknowledge of this event, and probably with matured financial plans, Mr Gladstone should have so fatally risked his grand opportunity of another of those sensational Budgets which in 1853 and 1860 proved the foundation of his fame and power. \* The extraordinary dissolution must either have been resorted to because circumstances known only to the Cabinet had arisen to make such a step the only alternative of an impossible resignation; or it must remain on record as the most suicidal blunder in the annals of party leadership.

A comprehensive reform of the whole system of local taxation and expenditure is speedily becoming the most important of unsolved questions. It was impossible that a Government which had been barely two months in office could attempt to grapple with it, in addition to all the labours which necessarily beset an incoming Ministry. But as a part performance of a difficult duty, and in order to retain some portion of the necessary income required to relieve the local rates from the burden of imperial wants, a revenue of £1,010,000 is reserved, and is at once distributed; £600,000 in aid of the expenses incurred in main-

taining the county police; £240,000, to be doubled next year, in aid of lunatic asylums; and £170,000 in order that Government property may contribute out of the national exchequer its rateable share of local expenditure. When we consider the enormous increase of rates in the last twenty years, the circumstance that they are all levied on one class of property, that they grow up silently and secretly, and are gradually being utilised to defray distinctly imperial expenditure, wherever a local organisation is necessary, as in the case of education for imperial purposes, it is high time that the whole system of imperial and local taxation should be thoroughly revised, and their mutual relations adjusted in a spirit of fairness. The local expenditure of the country is now nearly half the whole of its imperial disbursements; and if we except from the latter the charge for the national debt, the proportion may be stated as three-fourths. Nearly all local taxation is direct taxation; and that system, together with the income-tax, demands the patient attention of the country. For the last thirty-two years the other branch of finance which indirectly affects us through consumption has been steadily reformed; and Sir Stafford Northcote may be said to have brought that great enterprise to its conclusion by repealing the sugar duties.

The course is now clear for the great sister enterprise, full of difficulty and complicated detail—viz., the reform of the whole system of direct taxation, imperial and local. Upon this subject, while retaining a million and a quarter of revenue with a view to a future scheme, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made these deliberate and measured



observations : " We put it first, because it seems to us, upon the whole, the object of the highest national interest at the present time. It would be a most inadequate view to take of the subject to say of those who urge upon us a reform of our system of local taxation, that they desire to get rid of certain burdens. We ought to consider the position which the question really occupies, not only in our financial, but in our whole social and political system. We look back to the year 1842 as, in a certain sense, the commencement of a new financial epoch ; and, no doubt, during that epoch a great revolution has been effected in the financial system—and in the most important branch of it—by the reform of our system of indirect taxation effected by Sir Robert Peel and by the late Prime Minister. There has been a great remission of taxation,—mountains, I may say, have been removed from the pressure which taxation puts upon the consumers, and also upon the trade and industry of the country. We have done an amount of work of which any nation may be proud in the course of about one generation. But it now seems to us that there is another side to the question of finance, which stands as much in need of attention and reform as did the side of indirect taxation in the days of Sir R. Peel and in the year 1842, and that is the great question of our direct, and especially of our direct local taxation."

All parties are agreed that the condition of our local government is "a chaos as regards authorities, a chaos as regards rates, and a worse chaos than all as regards areas." There is a mass of detail connected with it which will satisfy the most voracious appetite for work. But upon the question which more immediately affects future Budgets—viz., the shifting of

certain imperial burdens from the back of the rates, the Government have shadowed forth the views which will determine their future policy. The last Parliament resolved, by a great majority, that no solution of the question would be satisfactory which did not provide, either in whole or in part, for the transfer to the national exchequer of all charges required for the administration of justice, police, and lunatics. Sir Stafford Northcote, speaking on behalf of a strong Government able to execute their declared policy, divides the complaints against local taxation into three heads. "It is said, in the first place, that there are imperial services which are charged exclusively, or in undue proportion, on local resources. It is said, in the second place, that the area of rating is not fair, and that many classes of property, including the very important class of personalty, are exempted from the burdens which are borne for the benefit of all kinds of property, the owners of personal property among the rest. And there is also a third complaint, coming, perhaps, from rather different quarters from those in which we hear most of these complaints made—viz., that our system of local taxation is bad and uneconomical, because we have a bad system of management, a bad system of administration, and an improper division of the country into local districts. I think there is truth in all these complaints." The immediate measure of relief to local taxation was then fixed at £1,250,000, of which £1,010,000 will be experienced in the ensuing year. Some hints were thrown out in the course of the speech as to the possible transfer to local authorities of some of the assessed taxes.

Now, assuming such a policy to be carried out, and rates to that extent diminished, the obvious consequence is a diminution of imperial

revenue, and an increase of imperial expenditure. Mr Dudley Baxter has shown, by a process of calculation which baffled the statistical efforts of Mr Goschen, aided by all the resources of office, that real property pays under the present system local and imperial taxes to the extent of 12 per cent upon its income; while personal property pays 5 per cent on its income to the imperial taxes, and nothing at all to the local taxes; and industrial incomes (of a class which pay income-tax) only pay 3 per cent. This proportion is independent of, or in addition to, the general taxes on expenditure or consumption which are common to every kind of income.

Under these circumstances, our old friend the income-tax comes once more into special prominence, as a necessary instrument in the work of financial reform, and further as required, notwithstanding all the objections to Schedule D, for the purpose of helping to redress the inequality between real and personal taxation, by keeping alive one efficacious mode of enforcing direct contribution from personal incomes. Accordingly, that subject follows next in order in Sir Stafford Northcote's speech. And in treading upon this subject, like all his predecessors, the Chancellor of the Exchequer trod as wistfully as if a mine were ready to explode beneath him. The memory of 1816, and of some great outbursts of resentment against the income-tax, haunts the minds of our leading statesmen, till there is not one of them who is prepared to declare himself in favour of its continuance. No one commits himself to even a qualified approval of it, without so many reservations and exceptions, that a speedy retreat from his position can be effected with the utmost facility. "It would be wrong and culpable in us," said Sir Stafford Northcote, knowing all

the while that he could no more part with this tax than he could fly, "if on so short a notice we were to come forward with a definite or decided proposition with respect either to the absolute remission or the absolute perpetuation of the tax." He apologised for not throwing down this mighty structure at six weeks' notice, evidently with the feeling that Mr Gladstone's manifesto had raised hopes which, notwithstanding the result of the elections, might still be rampant. But he also said, that we may take it for granted that if the income-tax is abolished, "some means must be found of making the owner of personal property contribute towards the burdens of the country. Possibly, if you retain the income-tax it will be found that his contributions to that tax supply the deficiency; but that is a point which requires careful consideration." The difficulties of the subject were met and surmounted by the remission of a penny; and thus the tax has reached the lowest point since its reimposition in 1842.

We are not weighted with any responsibilities which prevent an expression of opinion upon the subject of this system of finance, which was long described as a giant whose special duty it was to shield us in time of war, which was called forth from its repose by Sir Robert Peel to aid in commercial reform and the relief of indirect taxation, and which is now, we venture to predict, again required for a long term of years to aid in the reform of direct taxation, and to redress the inequalities of the burdens upon real and personal property and income.

There is hardly any subject within the range of English politics about which so much has been written and spoken as the income-tax; and there is hardly



any subject about which the public mind is so little matured. Perhaps some future generation may be inclined to say, that there is no subject with which Queen Victoria's statesmen have had to deal—unless, indeed, they except that of Parliamentary Reform—upon which the leading men of the day were more prone to say one thing and mean another. For thirty-two years this tax has been imposed without any intermission, or chance or reasonable prospect of intermission; and yet all our leading men, one after the other, have reiterated their conviction that the tax was a great fiscal reserve for purposes of war, and necessarily a mere temporary expedient in times of peace. It would be harsh, in consequence, to accuse all our public men of conscious insincerity; but these constant denunciations of the tax as a part of our permanent finance system, coupled with its projected abolition having been recently made the subject of a grand political *coup d'état* without the faintest prospect of success or even favourable consideration, suggest to us that the time has come when the public ought firmly to resolve whether it shall be hereafter regarded as, to use Mr Laing's expression, the keystone of our financial system, or whether policy and principle require its speedy extinction.

The latest utterances of our party leaders—those which were made on the eve of a general election, and which are therefore presumed to be the most elaborate enunciations of their policy—were in favour of the repeal of the tax. Mr Gladstone made the promise of its repeal the basis of his demand for restoration to popular favour and political power. He pledged himself that there would be a surplus of five millions, which amount, together with the necessary "readjustments," would enable him to effect the proposed remission.

Mr Disraeli immediately followed with the declaration, which is well borne out by the pages of 'Hansard,' that the repeal of the income-tax had always been part of his policy, and that any Ministry would be ready to abolish that particular impost when circumstances permitted; which he subsequently explained to mean that he was in favour of its gradual extinction. It is not too much to say that the elections went off without the smallest reference to the income-tax. The country was profoundly uninterested in the whole question. We can hardly expect any tax to be popular; but as far as the result of the general election goes, it is indifferent, if not hostile, to the policy of repealing the income-tax by means of other impositions. Moreover, it seems to be now ascertained that the country has no decided and deep-rooted objections to the tax being for some time to come grafted on the national system of finance. And with that decision deliberately arrived at, and that fact clearly ascertained, the tax evidently enters upon a new phase of its history and existence. Moreover, if we add up all the years of the present century during which the tax has not been in operation, we shall find that, although three-fourths of the century have elapsed, scarcely more than one-fourth of it has been free from the imposition of this "odious impost." As far as appearances go, this temporary tax has been in permanent operation, is cheerfully endured, and is not likely to be parted with. Yet the volumes of 'Hansard' teem with declarations that this impost is a great fiscal reserve, whose function is to shield us in war—a giant, whose power in time of peace may only be invoked to aid the task of commercial or financial reform. It has been denounced, no doubt with much truth, as a tax in which "in-

equality, vexation, and fraud are inherent," and of which the political dangers are manifest. Is it not time now to reconsider the objections to this system of taxation, and to ascertain by the light of thirty-two years of endurance, and the clearly-proved indifference to its repeal, whether those objections are necessarily fatal; or whether, under the altered circumstances of the country, they have not lost some portion of their weight, and have not become somewhat less useful for purposes of invective and party warfare?

We may rest assured that, under our representative system, in which speeches are so often made with a view to constituents, and to conciliate public favour, such unanimity of censure upon a policy which is steadily adhered to, would not have been exhibited by our public men unless there had been some strong current of public feeling to provoke it. And any one acquainted with the history of this tax knows that it brought with it from the early years of this century a legacy of hatred which was pronounced and vigorous. Accordingly, the statesmen who were concerned with its reimposition in 1842, or who have since had much to do with it—amongst whom two of the most eminent still remain as leaders of the rival parties—were all knee-deep in protestations against the "odious impost" to which they continuously resorted, and in favour of its being considered a mere temporary expedient. Meanwhile a generation has grown up which knows not Peel, and does not inherit the animosity of their fathers to this particular tax; and at the present moment the chief inducements to its repeal are to be found in past pledges of influential statesmen. Looking at the subject apart from the pledges of public men and its former unpopularity, there is much to explain the total failure of recent attempts to

promote an agitation against it. Some leading Indian statesmen have been prominent in connection with those attempts. Mr Massey, we believe, has honourably associated his name with the temporary removal of the income-tax from India, where, according to the best opinions, it ought never to have been imposed. Fresh from a triumph of this nature, and mindful of a former political position which at one time threatened to become conspicuous, he sought to lead a crusade against the same tax in the United Kingdom. But the circumstances were totally different. India, it cannot be too often repeated, is a poor country, and suffers severely from the friction of such a system of forced contribution. On the other hand, the wealth and resources of Great Britain appear to be boundless; and as they increase, the facility with which an income-tax may be borne increases also. At all events, in the space of one generation the produce of it has brought into the imperial exchequer a net sum exceeding two hundred and fifty millions of money. During the whole of that time, the annual tax, except during the Crimean war, has never been up to 5 per cent, and has very rarely indeed exceeded 3 per cent. A penny in the pound will in very short time, if we maintain our present rate of increase in the national resources, yield two millions of money; and it is obvious that, under those circumstances, the tax is capable of yielding with ease a large revenue in times of peace, and would still remain, as respects a considerable portion of its strength, a powerful reserve for purposes of war.

It was in the very midst and crisis of the revolutionary war that Mr Pitt, finding that the resources of the country were being strained to the utmost, brought forward in a celebrated speech his project of the income-tax. From 1798 to 1816,



with a very short interval, it was in force; and in the last eleven years of that period it was in full operation. It has often been argued that if that system had been resorted to as early as 1793, the national debt would not have existed at all, or at least not in its present colossal proportions. While it was in operation, the annual income of the country was more than sufficient to meet the charges of Government and the annual cost of the war. The severity of its burden was enormous, and directly peace was secured, the Ministry were obliged to repeal the tax; although when it was first imposed, so far was Mr Pitt from regarding it as essentially a war tax, that a large portion of the debt was specially charged upon the revenue so to be obtained. The policy in its inception was to provide, by means of the particular tax, for the repayment of debt after the expenses of war had ceased.

But in 1816 no power on earth could have induced the English nation to tolerate for a single year the continuance of that burden. The people spurned it from their backs with an outburst of almost vindictive animosity. It must be recollected that for years it had been almost greater than they could bear. In the three years' interval of peace after the treaty of Amiens, they had gladly exchanged it for a considerable increase to the duties on beer, malt, and hops. Ten per cent was the amount at which it was levied. It was originally estimated to yield at that rate 10 millions of money, and in 1816 it apparently produced something under 15 millions. The difference between the power of the tax then and now may be seen at once from the fact that, imposed at that rate now, it would yield to the exchequer the annual sum of at least 45 millions. United Europe could not raise half that sum without a loan. It is unnecessary now to retain the

whole of that enormous reserve of power simply for purposes of war. A moderate use of it may fairly be made in times of peace without impairing the efficiency and strength of the reserve. And if, as Turgot used to say, the art of finance was simply how to pluck the fowl without making it cry out, the enormous wealth of the country may easily submit to a moderate direct taxation without violating the first principles of art. The saying of Turgot was the justification or excuse for excessive indirect taxation. When Parliament resolved that the effect of that was forcibly to repress the springs of industry, and thereby contract the national resources, it was obliged to impose and retain for more than thirty years a direct tax upon incomes, which is no longer borne with impatience, and has gradually established itself, contrary to the promises of finance Ministers, as a permanent part of our financial system.

The financial history of the country since 1816, and the occurrences with regard to the income-tax itself, will be ransacked in vain to account for the extraordinary reluctance and hesitation with which the subject is approached surviving so long the manifest acquiescence of the people. No doubt it was regarded with horror and animosity at the end of the Peninsular war. But the period (1816-1842) of more than a quarter of a century which elapsed from the repeal of the first tax to the imposition of the second was one of general peace, and was marked by a great revival of trade and a great increase of national wealth. During that time the currency was restored, and some remissions of taxation were made. A balance of at least £20,000,000 of duties was remitted in that interval. The demand gradually grew during that interval for the reconstruction of

our whole financial system ; and in consequence, the necessity of reviving the income-tax was frequently discussed. And even as early as 1830, all the great authorities on the subject of taxation, except Sir Robert Peel—namely, Mr Huskisson, Mr Poulett Thomson, and Sir Henry Parnell—while they agreed in recommending large remissions of taxation upon various raw materials of industry and articles of consumption, also agreed in recommending the imposition of an income-tax. But while financial reformers were in favour of this course, and looked upon this particular tax as an essential part of financial reform, the great party leaders of the time, Sir R. Peel, Lord Althorpe, and Lord Palmerston, were either actively hostile to it, or at least did not venture to support it. The remembrance of the hatred which the burden had produced, deterred those who were responsible for the fortunes of political parties from undertaking the task of proposing its renewal.

Meanwhile, the necessity of eventually resorting to it, and the impossibility of holding it in reserve, was every year becoming more apparent. The number of articles subject to duty was more than 1000 ; in 1842 we had arrived, according to the testimony of Sir R. Peel, "at the limits of taxation upon articles of consumption ;" and, nevertheless, for years the expenditure had exceeded the revenue. When it is constantly asserted that the first income-tax was imposed by Mr Pitt purely as a war tax, it is right to remember that he charged it with the repayment of debt, and therefore contemplated its continuance during time of peace. When it is as constantly asserted that the second income-tax was imposed by Sir Robert Peel as the means of lessening the tariff and reducing duties, it is right to remember that in 1842

he increased the number of articles subject to duty from 1052 to 1163, although he reduced the amount imposed ; that up to that time he had not been a champion of commercial reform ; but that he was profoundly impressed with the necessity of increasing the revenue, so as to restore public credit, which had been impaired by successive deficits. In short, the great founder of English reformed finance discovered in 1842 that an income-tax was indispensable to meet the ordinary expenditure of the country in times of peace. Until he became Minister, Sir Robert Peel had always held that nothing short of extreme necessity would justify Parliament in imposing an income-tax in time of peace. He had constantly objected to a commutation of taxes ; in 1840 he had approved of increasing indirect taxation in preference to resorting to any direct impost. The great danger which he apprehended from reformed Parliaments was an uncontrollable impatience of the necessary taxation. He was ardently in favour of maintaining a surplus revenue, and denounced the growing disposition to favour deficits on the ground that the money required to fill them was money left to fructify in the pockets of the people—language so frequently used now when any proposal is made to repay debt. Thus it is clear that the main object of reimposing the income-tax was to restore public credit, to enable the nation to pay its way, to remove the serious difficulties of the financial position of the country. From that time to the present the language that has been held has uniformly pointed to the tax being a temporary burden ; the conduct of Ministries and the policy of Parliament have as uniformly pointed to its being a permanent portion of the national finance. It was resorted to because after a quarter of a century of profound peace the nation,



heavily burdened with debt, could not pay its way without it. It has been retained ever since as a matter of policy, because the advantages of retaining it outweighed those of repealing it. And the time has arrived when, notwithstanding the pledges of public men, the policy of grafting it on our finances as a permanent part of the system—its keystone, if we may so call it—must be decided solely with reference to present considerations of convenience and prudence.

We do not underrate the former unpopularity of the tax. It required a very strong Government to venture upon the experiment of restoring it, and the proposal met, as might have been expected, with strenuous opposition. The history of the tax and its vicissitudes from 1842 to the present time is soon told. But it is the history of a great change of feeling, and of a growing acquiescence in the burden, and it attests the altered fiscal and social circumstances of the country. In 1842, even Sir Robert Peel, with his invincible majority and high personal authority, only dared to propose its imposition for a limited period—viz., for three years, with a distinct intimation that at the end of that time it should cease. And the steps by which it gradually passed from a mere temporary tax to a permanent place in the revenue of the country are worth recording. In 1845, Sir R. Peel proposed its renewal for a further term of three years, expressing a hope that in five years the tax might be parted with. Even in three years public feeling had grown upon the subject. The country had begun to look with a different eye upon the whole system of taxation. It began to be convinced that the smaller duties produced the larger revenue. The enormous advantages accruing from the remission of indirect taxes placed the income-tax in a new and

more favourable light. Whatever might have been the case in 1842, when disastrous deficits were uppermost in the national mind, in 1845 it was deliberately consented to as part of a policy of reforming the whole system of national taxation. The experiment of reducing duties was beginning to prove attractive, and the country was growing reconciled to the indispensable condition of an income-tax.

Consequently, the remissions made in 1845 were nearly three times as great as in 1842, and the principle of absolutely repealing duties, instead of merely reducing them, was then introduced. But for this policy, it is quite clear that the equilibrium between revenue and expenditure could then have been maintained without the tax; and that, consequently, Parliament reimposed it, and the nation submitted to it, in that year, purely from choice, and not from necessity. And besides, the language used at the time by Sir Robert Peel with reference to its eventual removal was much weaker than it had been in 1842, and the policy of its being subsequently continued was broadly hinted at. And with regard to the Opposition of that day, headed by Lord John Russell, they denounced the first reimposition of the tax on the ground that, imposed under such circumstances, and accompanied by such extensive reductions of indirect taxation, it was in reality a permanent burden, and must be so regarded. Then, as thereafter, it was denounced as a tax in which "inequality, vexation, and fraud were inherent;" but in 1845 the Liberal party assented to its reimposition, and contented themselves with denouncing the policy of its permanence—a marked alteration in the attitude which they had assumed in 1842, when they stoutly resisted it at every stage of the progress of the Bill. In 1848 the

Liberals were in power. They found that the ordinary revenue had been reduced, and the expenditure had been increased, and that the income-tax had already become an indispensable part of ways and means. Accordingly, Lord John Russell, as Prime Minister, proposed to renew it for five years, and to increase it from sevenpence to a shilling in the pound for the first two out of those five years. The first outcry against the tax was when it was proposed at the rate of a shilling. Successive Parliaments would patiently submit to a triennial tax of sevenpence; and an impost in that form was settling down into one of the permanent institutions of the country.

In 1851, Sir Charles Wood in his Budget asked for a renewal of the income-tax for a further term of three years, and its history entered upon a transition period. Lord John Russell's Government resigned, and Lord Stanley (the late Lord Derby) at that time expressed more strongly than any other statesman his opposition to the tax as a permanent part of our financial system. He said that Sir Robert Peel had expressly pledged himself that the tax should cease when the financial equilibrium was restored, and that without that pledge the House of Commons would never have consented to it. He insisted that the faith of successive Ministries was pledged to its abolition, and that its reduction should not be rendered impossible by frittering away every surplus as it arose. The Conservatives strongly objected to retain the tax for the purpose of further reducing indirect taxation. The Radicals called for its reconstruction, so as to redress the inequality of its incidence as between fixed and temporary incomes. The financial question was also complicated with the question of agricultural protection. The supporters of free-trade

closed their ranks against the remission of the income-tax, and defeated by a majority of 48 an amendment on the Budget to the effect that the income-tax should be reduced, with a view to its ultimate and gradual abolition. Then, as in 1860, the Conservatives were defeated in their endeavours to abolish the tax. Parliament, however, renewed it for only one year; and Mr Hume obtained a select committee, which inquired into all its difficulties and inequalities, and sanctioned the belief that it was impossible to reconstruct the tax, and that it must be either endured or abolished.

Mr Disraeli insisted that direct taxation, if accompanied by a system of large exemptions, limiting it practically to a single class, is nothing more or less than a forced contribution levied upon that class. In 1852, he proposed to renew the tax for three years, and to extend its operation over a wider area. Next year Mr Gladstone readjusted it, so as to render its extinction possible in 1860. He extended it to Ireland, and to incomes between £100 and £150 a-year, at the rate of fivepence in the pound. He made a determined stand against the tendency of public men to decry every mode of raising revenue, whether of customs, excise, or income-tax; he demonstrated the impossibility of reconstructing the tax; and what with the failure of Mr Hume's committee, and the success of this memorable speech, the country has ever since acquiesced in that view.

The Budget of 1853 was regarded as a settlement of the income-tax controversy. Ireland was brought within its operation, and its public opinion conciliated by a considerable debt (contracted to England during the famine of 1848) being forgiven, and by a considerable remission of its spirit duties. Next



year it was doubled, and placed at one shilling and twopence in the pound, in order to meet the exigencies of the war with Russia. The next year it reached one and fourpence; and according to the Act which imposed it, it was to remain at that rate till April 5, 1858. But an agitation against the "war ninepence"—that is, the difference between the triennial sevenpence of Sir R. Peel and the rate necessitated by hostilities in the Crimea—led to its reduction before the time for its expiry had arrived.

In succeeding years it was reduced, according to the arrangement made in 1853; and the income-tax by law expired in 1860, when the nation voluntarily, with Mr Gladstone for its Chancellor of the Exchequer, submitted to its renewal, in order to carry out a commercial treaty with France, and effect further financial reforms. No hope was then held out, far less was any engagement then made, for its prospective or gradual extinction.

Now, if we take our stand in 1860, and thence cast our eyes backward upon the history of this tax, and endeavour to measure its intrinsic unpopularity, and the national unwillingness to endure it, the result is this: Our forefathers endured its utmost scourge when necessity demanded it; but they utterly repudiated the arrangement by which it was to be retained after the war was concluded, for a period long enough to extinguish the debt. The moment the Treaty of Amiens was signed, they compelled the Addington Ministry to remit the tax. The moment the Treaty of Vienna was concluded, notwithstanding the load of debt, the tax was steadily rejected, and no Ministry for a quarter of a century dared to propose its renewal. But in the interval the wealth of the country had nearly doubled; and, in order to restore the

public credit, and to reform the tariff, the nation submitted, under the guidance of Sir Robert Peel, to a triennial tax of 7d. in the pound. If we except the years 1851-53, the occasions for any outburst of its unpopularity and discontent were limited to those when it was proposed to increase it to a shilling in 1848, and to keep up war taxation in 1857, after peace had been concluded. The interval just mentioned was no doubt one of considerable agitation against the tax, during which all parties and statesmen pledged themselves against it. The Government which sought to impose it was extremely weak, and had lost the support of Sir Robert Peel. Protectionists were hostile to an impost which had led to free-trade; Radicals denounced the inequality of its incidence, and were hostile to it, pending reconstruction. After 1853, Parliament frequently resounded with debates which tended to its extinction. The personal influence of Mr Gladstone had a great deal to do with it. The Conservatives supported the arrangement which had been made by his celebrated Budget. But in 1860, the tax, without a murmur, was raised to tenpence. In the desert of barren protestations, Sir Cornewall Lewis alone of leading statesmen had the courage to hold different language. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Palmerston's first Administration. Though not a showy debater, nor possessed of any very brilliant qualities, he was one of the soundest statesmen whom this country has produced; and his death was a severe loss to his party and to Parliament. "The income-tax," he said, "is one that falls in most part on the wealthier part of the community. It is easy to get up in this House, in an assembly of gentlemen, every one of whom pays income-tax, and de-

nounce it; but before the income-tax can be abolished, it will be necessary to address assemblages of a very different character—assemblages which will embrace as few individuals who pay income-tax as this House embraces persons who are exempt from its payment.” Only last January the question of its abolition was formally raised; and how many of these assemblages were interested in favour of it?

In the year 1860, Mr Gladstone demonstrated that if Parliament chose to measure its expenditure by the estimates of 1853 the income-tax could easily have been abandoned. In the interval, the wealth of the country had grown  $16\frac{1}{2}$  per cent; the expenditure, so far as it was optional and subject to the action of public opinion, had increased at the rate of 58 per cent. In that interval expenditure made a great bound forwards, which has never since been materially increased or diminished. The increase in the revenue from spirit duties alone would have enabled Parliament to meet the increased charges entailed by the debt contracted during the Russian war, and would also have covered any deficiency arising from the expectations of 1853 with regard to other items having been disappointed. Parliament deliberately chose, under Mr Gladstone’s auspices, to retain the income-tax at an advanced rate rather than diminish the expenditure. The relief accruing from the termination of the Long Annuities was utilised for the purposes of commercial reform; and the tariff, which had since 1842 been reduced from a total of 1163 to one of 419 articles, was in 1860 reduced to 48, of which 15 only contributed any important returns. An amendment was proposed, and supported by the Conservative party, to the effect that the House was not “prepared to disappoint the just expectations of the country by reimposing

the income-tax at an unnecessarily high rate;” but it was defeated by a majority of 116. Nothing was said about eventually extinguishing the tax: all parties recognised the necessity of continuing it—the only contest was as to the rate in the pound. From that time to the present it has been continuously imposed at decreasing rates, till it has reached the modest sum of threepence in the pound, to be reduced to twopence if the Budget is carried.

From this review of the history of this tax, it is clear that whatever the pledges and utterances of individual statesmen may have been, there has been no indication on the part of the House of Commons or the country to deal with this item of revenue as a temporary expedient. It has never pledged itself to that policy. It easily settled itself to a triennial tax of 7d. in the pound; in 1851 and 1860 it rejected resolutions proposed in a spirit of hostility. The House of Commons refused to reconstruct the tax, extended its operation, included Ireland within its grasp, and in 1860 increased its amount, almost in derision of the feeble machinations by which a former House had sought to enforce a contrary policy. And under existing circumstances it would, we maintain, be extremely unwise to part with the machinery and system by which a considerable revenue may with so little difficulty be raised. It is a code of taxation by itself, which has been elaborated by several successive strokes which the wealth of the country enables it to bear, which is useful to redress inequalities of taxation as between rich and poor, and does so by a process which is patent to all, and brings home to the minds of the poor that the tax-gatherers have far more to do with the rich than with them. It brings within its jurisdiction incomes of every description, except those arising from manual



labour—that is, from land, from houses, from farming, from the funds, from trades and professions, and from public salaries and pensions.

Mr Gladstone's analysis of its incidence in the year 1853 was that land and houses paid 12-28ths of the tax, that trades paid 9-28ths, making together three-fourths of the tax; while funds, salaries, and professions made the other fourth. He also showed that the income-tax assessment of land and houses was made without the deduction of 16 per cent in respect of those deductions with which gross income derived from those sources is always chargeable. Also, that one-fourth of such gross income went into the pockets of mortgagees, annuitants, and others who receive under settlements. When these considerations were allowed full force, it appeared that when trade paid at the rate of 7d. in the pound, the owners of land and houses in reality paid at the rate of 9d. in the pound—which was a very similar proportion to that which Mr Disraeli had suggested the year before, of 7d. on land and 5½d. on trade.

The chief difficulties as to its inequality were disposed of by Mr Gladstone's argument in 1853, and the permanence of the tax will readily meet the objection of those who descant upon the difference between permanent and temporary incomes, by permanently charging the former and temporarily charging the latter; without regard to the argument, that as all income is annual, it must all of it contribute to the annual charge. The problem to solve is as to the point where true policy requires that exemption from the tax should cease. At present the line is drawn at £100 a-year, which as nearly as possible exempts half the total income of the country, the aggregate of incomes below that amount being as nearly

as possible equal to the aggregate above that amount. A deduction of £80, representing the cost of the actual necessities of life, is allowed in case of incomes which do not exceed £200.

As regards fraud and evasion, the difficulties and objections diminish the longer the tax is in operation. The assessments of visible property have in course of years been rendered more faithful by continuous efforts being made to adjust their true value. Assessors and surveyors acquire increased insight as they gain in experience; and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue are constantly struggling against evasions under Schedule D. Although the greatest objection to the continuance of this system of taxation is the fraud which becomes habitual under that particular schedule, the greatest objection to its premature abolition is found in the same quarter. Until the time has arrived when the tax can not merely be parted with, by a spasmodic effort, but can be repealed without risk or danger of equally spasmodic renewal, such as has occurred in India, it is far wiser to retain the existing machinery and officials, whose permanence is essential to the efficient operation of the system. While the country retains the indifference to the tax which was manifested at the last election, it is in vain to hope for its permanent extinction. The vindictive hatred to it in 1816 secured its abolition for a quarter of a century. There is no trace of that feeling now; nor, if it were abolished, would there be any impediment on the score of popular feeling in the case of a Ministry reimposing it. It ought to be steadily enforced upon the country that until this system of taxation can be parted with, with an assured prospect of its having been finally superseded, and of the probable financial wants of the Exchequer being permanently supplied without

it, the evils of its temporary repeal will far outweigh any possible benefit. The Government have reserved their opinion upon it, and will wait the growth of public opinion. And we have offered this review of its history and its relations to our financial system to show that its repeal is not called for by any past or present unwillingness to bear it, or any intrinsic objections sufficient to outweigh the advantages of retaining it.

As respects the future, in addition to the great disadvantages which would result from the merely temporary rejection of the tax, it must be confessed that there is no reasonable chance of the financial equilibrium, contrary to the experience of thirty-two years, being maintained without it. The total expenditure of the country, local and imperial, amounts to more than a hundred millions, which is half again as high as it stood when the income-tax was first renewed. The expenses of Government show no signs of diminution; on the contrary, they have remained nearly stationary for more than ten years; and having regard to the army and navy estimates, the increased price of coal and iron, and the rise of wages, the probability is that they will increase. As for ways and means, we have abolished, one after the other, many sources of revenue; and in the Budget of this year we abandon permanently one which yields two millions. Mr Gladstone, in 1853, indicated that at that time the income-tax could be parted with by the conjunction of three measures, one of which must be a tax upon land, however, and other visible property, of, perhaps, 6d. in the pound; and another, of a system of licences upon trade made universal, and averaging some-

thing like £7; and the third, a change in the system of legacy duties. The programme is not attractive, and with regard to the first proposition, it has been forestalled by the increasing pressure of rates. The total produce of rates has been doubled since that time; and when we compare burdens, it must be admitted that the rates are an infinitely worse burden than the income-tax. They grow up silently and secretly: the annual poor-rate alone has increased  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions since 1860. No one criticises it with any effect; while, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes an additional penny to the income-tax, the proposal rings through the country in a couple of hours, is discussed in every household, and cannot be carried out unless with the deliberate and public sanction of the three estates of the realm. These are ample considerations to render the prospect of abolishing the income-tax a distant one;—diminishing sources of revenue, increasing expenditure, an inevitable reform of local taxation, the duty of operating upon the national debt. This last item opens a new field of discussion. The manner in which it has been met is the weakest point in the Budget. It ought to be placed before the country that the produce of a threepenny income-tax nearly represents the difference between the charge of the debt to us in 1874, and the charge of the debt to our forefathers in 1816. It represents the annual relief from the pressure of debt, which has been secured to us by the wise providence and honourable self-restraint of two generations. It represents the minimum of obligation which we in our turn owe to our descendants.



## A KNIGHT OF RHINELAND.

CROWNING the steep his castle stood,  
Where Nature, with her deftest skill,  
Had traced the windings of the flood,  
And cleft the vale, and built the hill.

Above she spread her softest skies,  
Around she breathed her purest air,  
Bestowing freely what the wise  
Might seek with fasting and with prayer.

On slopes where most the south wind blew  
That subtle alchemist, the vine,  
Distilled from sunshine, cloud, and dew,  
Rare juices with the amber's shine.

Westward, great hills a curtain drew  
Before the sun, whose sinking beam  
Touched all their pinnacles, and threw  
Their lucid shadows to the stream.

But elsewhere, from his battlement,  
For leagues he saw the champaign spread,  
Verdure, with spires and roofs besprent,  
Till Rhine flashed out, a silver thread.

Ah ! if the poet's dream were true  
That Nature, in such language, can  
Find suasive utterance, and imbue  
With her own soul the soul of man ;

Peace in the hills' repose impart,  
Love on the fragrant winds dispense,  
And breathe in sunshine through the heart  
The gracious sky's beneficence ;

Then had this Knight, so fraught with her,  
Lived large of heart and free of hand,  
And stood, as Nature's almoner,  
A fount of blessings in the land.

But, sooth, if he her scholar were,  
His inspirations well might flow  
From wasting floods and deserts bare,  
Fierce hurricanes and polar snow.

His sway was as the eagle's sway,  
He, from his eyrie, round him saw  
A vassal race, and he and they  
Held might for right, and will for law.

The abject eye, the servile stoop,  
Told how the children of the soil  
Had lost all memory of the hope  
That sweetens thrift and lightens toil.

Stored in his cellars with his wine  
Were weary peasants' sighs and tears,  
The curses breathed above the vine,  
The pinings of the hopeless years.

The traveller through that land so fair,  
Who marked those towers against the sky,  
Crouched o'er his steed, put up a prayer,  
A whispered prayer, and hurried by.

On a peaked hill, a league away,  
A lordlier castle rose to sight ;  
Its turrets caught the earliest day  
And latest kept the evening light.

Fair part it was of that fair scene,  
But to the Knight a hateful spot ;  
A rival's prosperous state had been  
In bowers of Paradise a blot.

Nor vain his hate ; a night there came  
When din of arms the stillness broke ;  
When towers went crashing down in flame,  
And all the stars were veiled in smoke.

And morning lit a dreary waste  
Of shattered wall and ruined roof,  
Lawn, bow'r, and vineyard all defaced,  
As if the fiend had stamped his hoof.

The Knight laughed low to see the sky  
At rift and broken arch look through,  
And marked with well-contented eye  
The blackened rafters bar the blue.

And so he lived ;—and when he died  
His spirit flourished in his line,  
And still were dreaded far and wide  
The robber-chieftains of the Rhine ;

While o'er them, pleading all in vain,  
Hung the soft beauty of the sky ;  
Vines clothed the hill, and corn the plain,  
And the great stream flowed stately by.



## OUR FAIR WIND—SETTING SAIL.

If the sayings of Liberal doctors be true, politicians are now about to observe the official career of a Party without a Policy. We know how often it was said—so often, indeed, and so generally, that we need not cite an instance—that the Conservative party had no policy. And this assertion was generally coupled with the further assertion that the Conservative party could not possibly attain to office, the latter assertion being a consequence of the former: "The Conservative party has no policy, *therefore* it cannot be the governing party." This was the sweet unction that was laid to Liberal souls any time up to the beginning of last February or thereabouts. At that season the unction ceased to comfort; for it was seen that, whether or not credited with a policy, the Conservatives were surely coming into office. Well, then, it was clearly enough demonstrated that the want of a policy (whatever Liberals may have meant by that expression) did not bar our side from office, and that one clause of the proposition was untrue. As to the other clause—the affirmation that we have no policy—we by no means admit it; but yet in the Liberal sense it is probably true, for Liberals may be supposed to mean simply that we have no blazing principle to announce, that we do not propose to overturn or to plunder. Whatever they mean, their *sequitur* is plainly false, for, policy or no policy, the Conservative party is assuredly in office, and upheld in power by no half-spoken or mistakable expression of the popular will.

The above fallacy would scarcely be worth the words by which we have endeavoured to expose it, were

it not that we are now, since the break-down of the doctrine, tried by curious teaching of the same kind; for seers and sages have been telling us lately that the Opposition must for a time be weak and ineffectual—and why? Because the Liberals have no policy!! If, then, the sayings of the autumn and winter, and the sayings of this present spring, be true, neither party has a policy, and the body of legislators in this new Parliament will speak as men beating the air; and the great mass of the country, though ranging itself under party names, has no distinct notion of anything to be desired or to be attempted politically. Can this possibly be so, or are we once more beset with a fallacy? We think that we have to deal with a fallacy. We take the proposition, "The Radicals are powerless in opposition, because they have no policy," to be equally erroneous with the other proposition, "The Conservatives cannot take office, because they have no policy." The powerlessness of the Opposition is plain enough, of course; but is it not equally plain that the Opposition has a policy? Do not some Liberals wish to disestablish the Church of England? do not some desire to reform the House of Lords? do not some (very few, we hope) think with Sir Charles Dilke that the time has come for dispensing with a sovereign in these realms? These ideas surely indicate a policy. But it may be replied that, though these, truly, are well-known Liberal opinions, they cannot be said to have taken as yet such definite shape as may fit them for the policy of a party. Well, then, looking at other pro-

jects, which are certainly more than rough-hewn in the Liberal mind, do not Liberals contemplate the repeal of the Education Act, or of some of its most important clauses? do not Liberals decree the maintenance of peace by making great sacrifice of our interests and our reputation (except on the Gold Coast)? and do they not maintain a continual warfare against privileges and endowments? To come to the most recent utterance of the late leader of the Liberal party, has not Mr Gladstone proclaimed abolition of the Income Tax and readjustment of other taxation, "the organisation of local and subordinate authority, under the control of Parliament," an extension of the benefits to be conferred by those powerful bodies the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the revision of the land laws and of the game laws, with a number of minor measures, as his policy? The Liberals are powerless in Opposition, not because they have no policy, but because they have too many policies, and those policies are altogether distasteful to the nation.

A decided policy, then, in the Liberal sense, is not essential in the body that is to administer affairs; for we have just seen a Government which has it not replace a Government which has it. But if we reflect that a policy does not necessarily mean volcanic action, we see how a Conservative Ministry may own a well-defined policy, though not what ardent Radicals would think worthy of being designated by that name. There is a policy of forbearance and toleration, which refrains from harassing and confiscating, and which nevertheless aims at making this country respected by other nations, —a policy the reverse of that which, in the epigrammatic words of the Prime Minister, is described as be-

ing vexatious and irritating at home, and supine and submissive abroad. Now the country has given a significant hint that this is the sort of policy which it desires to see followed, for it has called to power the party which is conspicuous in deprecating violent changes and disruptions, and it has not pledged that party to any action whatever.

It was made evident to us in 1868 that a party may sometimes obtain office by proclaiming a policy. Such party generally attains its end by exhibiting its policy through glasses of its own preparation, by which the results are made to look in every way charming; but, alas! when the reality comes to be proved, the charm is only too likely to vanish, and the nation to accept, in place of the charmers, a less pretentious Administration of whom it does not care to demand the promise of any policy at all.

Spite of the sneers of their opponents, the Conservatives seem to have been credited by the people with a very distinct policy—not aggressive nor sensational, but a policy which has suddenly spread a calm over the country. The fact that the Government is no longer *en rapport* with leagues, sects, and numerous combinations representing political designs more or less revolutionary, takes away their threatening capacity from those associations, and reduces them all to insignificance. They still exist, no doubt, as they existed three months ago; but how changed is their position in the commonwealth! They can no longer keep us in a terror of expectation as to how soon they may be able to use the power of the State for the accomplishment of their designs; they have ceased to constitute a hydra assuming to guard and uphold a feeble Administration, whose perplexity it was



to choose which of the creature's throats it should first gratify with a victim. With the fall of the Radical Ministry their voices are hushed at once, and they, lately so formidable, almost disappear from our view. From the illustrious wearer of the crown down to the humblest subject who desires that his children shall be taught in their daily lessons to fear God, all of us experience relief from an undefined distrust. We dare once more to think of our national Church, our long established Legislature, our venerable universities, our schools, our corporations, our charities, without the dread that all or any of them may to-morrow be bartered away for a party victory. The power of the disturbers and theorists has, we say, shrunk to nothing at the mere appearance of a Ministry which will not submit to their dictation. How does this consist with the imputation of "no policy?" If it be a policy to vex and threaten all classes, and to countenance only the violent and ill-disposed, surely it is also a policy to let the quiet and orderly continue in peace, and to be a terror to only the lawless! The nation understands our policy, and has accepted it in preference to that of a Government which, after years of patience, it has at last cast off as an intolerable burden.

Short as is the period during which the Conservative Ministry has been in office, we may already note one particular wherein its policy is greatly preferable to that of its predecessor. A deputation waiting on a Minister, or a Member of Parliament asking information in the House, may now calculate upon being granted a patient hearing, and receiving a civil answer. As if to test the disposition in this respect of our new rulers, they have been beset, as never rulers were, with counsel and inquiry. It would

seem as if, after the rudeness of our Lowes and Ayrtons, and the meaningless mazes in which our late Premier made pretence of explaining himself, affability and plainness of speech were looked upon as things of primary necessity, and as if the people were bent upon testing these qualities,—just as in old days the courage of an aspirant to military reputation was put to severe trial at his first appearance in arms. The people are right in condemning ministerial *brusqueries*, and in taking strict order to prevent their repetition; the offences were more than mistakes of manner,—they were deliberate bids for the favour of the Jack Cades and levellers of all kinds who, although they expected the greatest deference to be shown to themselves, were gratified at seeing nobles, squires, and citizens insulted and puzzled. When Mr Guedalla discourteously signified to Mr Gladstone that "he would stand no nonsense," Mr Gladstone did not dare to reply to Mr Guedalla in the same strain; but what he could not retort he ingeniously, by means of his churlish colleagues, "passed on," and decent people had to suffer annoyance because Mr Guedalla would not brook an answer. In the new Administration the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Home Secretary, have thus far borne the brunt of the exhorting and catechising; but they have taken care, if they declined to take the advice tendered to them, or to comply with the petitioners' requests, not to wound men's feelings, or to send them away with spirits rising against the insolence of office, and against Government itself, because of its insolence. It is a fair inference that Ministers who respect social rights will respect also political rights, and the rights of property. As the bullying of deputations and the snubbing of

correspondents came from the same spirits who threatened the House of Lords, and cast a hawk's eye on the City charities, so mildness of demeanour may be taken to consist with minds not envious of other mens' goods, and not inclined to disturb the established order of things. Your "blazing" statesman despises *bienséance*, but good manners are good policy for all that.

We can name another branch of the policy which we hope may be found to guide our new rulers, and that is the principle of bestowing public honours and rewards for public services alone. Opinion was recklessly outraged by the conduct in this respect of the late Administration. On a retrospect of the promotions and appointments which they made, it would seem as if they regarded the patronage of the Crown as confided to them to be used in rewarding services rendered to party alone. We have commented in former days on the reward given to a notorious agitator and destroyer of public property, while the hands of his agents were scarce withdrawn from the barriers which they had been demolishing; and on the promotion of a peer for compromising the honour of the country, and blundering palpably. We do not desire to go back now to those instances, but we must draw attention to later cases wherein the power of promotion was shamelessly exercised. A noble duke (whose apologists we certainly are not) has been roundly censured for expressing his sense of their undeserving to the faces of some of Mr Gladstone's last-made peers. These lords, it should be remembered, are not to blame in respect of their peerages; they could hardly be expected to decline the proffered elevation, and it was certainly ungenerous to attack them personally, whatever their shortcomings,—and that, too, on

their first appearance in the august assembly into which they had been so indiscreetly introduced. But, then, why did Mr Gladstone provoke sarcasm, and give occasion for the outpouring of ill-humour, by braving our sense of decency and of common fairness in the dispensing of public honours? He was anxious, no doubt, to show that hard and trying work done by Ministers under his Premiership was not overlooked or made light of. But then, as the rewards given are public honours, the recipients should surely be men whose claims the public to some extent admits. To explain what we mean: Although we think that Mr Cardwell's military administration and Mr Chichester Fortescue's Irish administration were mistakes, we do not expect Mr Gladstone to take that view, and everybody seems to allow that these two Ministers, according to their lights, were indefatigable and well-intentioned—also, that they were inoffensive. We cannot, therefore, join in the strictures which have been levelled at their good fortune. But when one comes to look at the elevating of Mr Monsell and Mr Bruce, the cases are seen to be different. The one, whatever his merits may be, was promoted while the country was still chafing at a great and notorious scandal in the department over which he presided; and the other, during his term of office, continually incurred, either justly or unjustly, the complaints of the people. Mr Gladstone was not restricted to these selections. How differently would the people have viewed Mr Forster's advancement, had that gentleman been selected for nobility! We see continued in these bestowals of favour the same wrong-headedness which conceived the Collier and Ewelme blunders, and which, in fact, very largely contributed to Mr Gladstone's loss of the people's favour.



It is probable that the Ministry will soon develop a policy in reference to Irish affairs, and that it will be marked by a desire to benefit Ireland, while sternly declining to minister to Ultramontane designs. The value of all the concessions which have from time to time been made to Ireland was curiously demonstrated when, on bringing up the address in answer to the Royal speech in the House of Commons, Mr Butt brought on a debate by moving an amendment. In the course of that debate, Mr M. Henry remarked that the people of Ireland "believed the day was dawning when their voice would be heard in Parliament, and when those measures by which popular feelings and wishes were to be expressed, would be freely accorded to Ireland." The hon. Member also said that "the Irish people desired to have a gleam of hope held out that they should be brought within the constitution." If, then, the day has not dawned for Ireland, and Irishmen are not brought within the constitution, it is an interesting inquiry:—To what purpose has England granted Catholic Emancipation, and the various measures of so-called relief, up to the spoliation of the Protestant Church and the oppression of Irish landlords? As these measures were in succession invented and carried into effect, the author of each always assured us that his particular nostrum was the dayspring for which Ireland was eagerly looking, and which would end her discontent. The discontent certainly has not been ended yet. We believe, with Mr Henry, that the cure of it has yet to be made; but we go a step farther than he does. We believe that, just as no good effect followed the earlier measures, and just as Mr Gladstone's treatment has aggravated the disease, so Home Rule, if conceded, would lead to failure,

and, perhaps, to exacerbation. Until the Irish people can be induced to think for themselves in secular matters, the priests will take care that they shall never be contented. The invention of grievances is easy enough. It is not by assisting Rome to shut out the light, it is not by gagging, but by just the opposite course, that we must hope some day to reconcile Ireland. We must try to let in the light upon her. Light is increasing everywhere, and the influence of Rome is declining before it. The time must be coming when the Irish peasant will be assured that his eternal state must depend on something more certain than the caprice of a priest, and when he will cease to yield to the priest a terrified obedience in civil matters. In that sense we should be delighted to see the day dawn for Ireland. Till it does so dawn, the duty of England must be to govern Ireland, not to offer further weak indulgence which will not be responded to by a thought of gratitude or a word of thanks, but which will prove only an incitement to more active disaffection.

It was remarkable in the debate to which we have alluded that Mr Gladstone assumed the chief duty of answering the Home Rulers. The Right honourable gentleman, it is true, rose, partly with the view of using some arguments in defence of the late Ministry, which he had not, in his former speech on the address, had an opportunity of offering. He, however, spoke to the question of Home Rule, and so spoke as to cause the greatest regret that he had not thought it advisable to speak on the same subject with equal decision and force when he was a Minister. Mr Gladstone's belief in Irish grievances and in his power to alleviate them seems to be by no means so lively as it once was. He and his late colleagues

have become, he said, sadder and wiser men. Perhaps the sadness and the wisdom both date from the time of the rejection of the Irish University Bill in 1873, and this is a hint to Irish patriots that Mr Gladstone will not forget to settle his little account with them.

It will certainly be a part of the policy of the Conservative Administration to uphold the legislative power of the House of Lords—a negative policy, we shall be told. Granted, but a very important policy nevertheless. If it be a policy to paralyse and destroy this branch of the Legislature, equally it must be a policy to maintain it. It is a policy which, because it *is* negative, will probably not be regarded with the attention which it deserves. But it may be shown in few words that this policy of respecting the Upper House is one which may well occupy the thoughts of the country, now that it is tranquil and can judge equitably. The great crimes for which the people were last incited to execute vengeance on the House of Lords were its opposition to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and to the New Army Regulation. Now suppose that the Lords had succeeded in defeating or postponing both, or either of, those measures, would any harm have been done? Radicals told us that by disestablishing her Church we should reconcile Ireland; the House of Lords thought that by that measure we should do no such thing; which were right? Again, the Army Regulation Act was to purify the service of all kinds of corrupt influence, insure a sufficient influx of eligible recruits, store up a great reserve of fighting power, for ever put an end to panics, and to combine economy with efficiency. The House of Lords very much doubted whether the Bill submitted to them

would produce all these desirable results, and they would have waited for further information before taking a step which appeared to them hazardous: has the working of the Army Act justified their caution or has it not? We know now very well, by sad experience, that the opinions of the Lords on these points were wise and salutary, and that, if we had been tempted in our impatience to cripple or destroy that House because we could not convince it of what was untrue, we should have perpetrated a grievous wrong and an egregious folly. The lesson we should lay to heart now while we have a Ministry not disposed to misrepresent, or to inflame us against, the Upper House is, that the Lords are as likely to be right as the excited people, and that a time of excitement is not a fit time for estimating the value of an institution that has endured for many centuries.

It becomes clearer every day that the completeness of the Conservative victory at the last election was due to the lengthened period during which the late Government was permitted to prolong its days and to develop its quality. It might have received its *coup de grace* earlier, no doubt; but had it been sooner put out of its misery, the voice of the country would not have been so decided as it was in February of this 1874. Many a time we have said that all we desired in reference to Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright was, that the country should thoroughly know those right honourable gentlemen. The knowledge to which we were so anxious that the people should attain advanced more rapidly during the autumn of 1873 than during any other period of the Radical Government. This is proved by the elections of the recess,—elections of accumulating significance, the



crowning triumphs of which, as he himself confesses, drove Mr Gladstone to his last shift—his night attack. Now what the people had to learn, and what they did learn, was to fairly and clearly understand how much there was of good or useful qualities in the gentlemen whom we have named. Of Mr Bright it may be taken as proved, and we do not anticipate contradiction when we say it, that, whatever may be his power as an orator, however forcibly he may be able to present to popular and to legislative assemblies his own convictions, he has, as a Minister, signally disappointed the expectations of his friends. He has been unable to effect the arbitrary economy, the peace at any price, the godless education, or the depression of the House of Lords, which he boasted that an uncorrupt will would enable a Minister to effect; and although we know well that there were many excellent and sufficient reasons why Mr Bright could not have, and ought not to have, effected his objects, yet there he stands before the whole country, having notoriously failed to impress with his ideas even a Parliament in which there was a Liberal majority of 100. The only Parliament in which he could have hoped to enforce his views has now been replaced by another of a very different complexion. His opportunity has passed, and his designs have not been accomplished. He will still retain the power of sturdy thought and of popular oratory, but as an able statesman, his character has sunk to rise no more. As to Mr Gladstone, it was through an utter misconception of his character and abilities that the great impetus was given to the Radical party in 1868. Men had persuaded themselves, or been persuaded, that Mr Gladstone was a demigod, that nothing was too hard for him to achieve, and that he

would achieve nothing except of the most salutary kind, and with the most exalted motives. His reputation was too much for him; he could not act up to it. Like the man in the parable who took the highest room, he has been obliged to come down and find his proper level. Day by day, as the gilding was scratched off the idol and the less valuable metal beneath it was first suspected, and then only too certainly seen, admiration turned to disappointment and rage. His American mistake, his Black War, his inability to keep his party in hand, or to govern while he still had a majority of between 60 and 70, the jobs that were brought to light,—these and many another error and defect lost him at last the support of the country; and his offer to bribe the people with the remission of the income-tax and so on, put the last drops in the cup, and made his unpopularity overflow. Such a crushing fall has seldom been witnessed, following so closely on so great eminence. The great comet of 1868-9, has dwindled to a Jack-o'-lantern in 1874: after being exalted so high as to be thought above human comprehension, he is subjected to the analysis of every scribbler in a village broadsheet: for there is none so humble but he thinks he can penetrate and expound the springs of the great reverse with which all the land is ringing. A halfpenny will put any one who knows his letters in possession of the reasons, as understood by the cheap press, why Mr Gladstone could not govern, and why he was put down from his seat, and why it served him right. People talk of his return to his parliamentary career after a while, as if he had suffered no loss but what it is within his own volition to recover. This is a great mistake. He may by force of circumstances hold office

again, of course, but regain the place which he held in the country's opinion in 1868 he never will, if he should live to the age of Methusehah. Had we but party interest to consider, we should desire nothing better, in case of the Conservatives going again into opposition, than that the ruling party should be led by Mr Gladstone; but we are bound to think of what the country would suffer at his hands while he should be preparing the way for the return of our party to office. We need not, however, at present speak of a change. The Liberal party is completely disjointed, and, without doubt, the magnitude of its reverse is due to the late Ministry not having been hurried out of office.

Spite of the prognostications of our opponents, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has achieved a Budget-speech, and is, we trust, not in the least damaged by the operation. Indeed, we think that, on better acquaintance with Sir Stafford Northcote's first Budget, John Bull will be inclined to give it rather a high place among productions of that kind. We shall have gone to press before the chief discussion of it will take place; but we think we may be satisfied that, as a whole, the Budget will be acceptable to the country. Before speaking of its items we are bound to note that the computations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, though differing in some details from those of Mr Gladstone, as to the probable surplus for 1874-5, do on the whole confirm that right honourable gentleman's figures. There may be differences of opinion as to Sir Stafford Northcote's method of estimating, but certainly he has arrived at the conclusion that we may reckon on a surplus of over five millions. The reproach, therefore, levelled at Mr Gladstone, that he had been tempting the people by the exhibition of

an illusory surplus, was undeserved, or if deserved, it must be shared in by the present Chancellor, who, after full examination, adopts the amount. He goes no farther, we are happy to say, in accordance with Mr Gladstone's Greenwich manifesto. He does not propose rashly to extinguish the income-tax; and what he does propose, though remarkably free from sensational attempts, makes up a sound, sensible scheme, which, considering the short time that has been allowed for considering it and putting it together, may satisfy us that our Finance has fallen into reliable hands. Careful reflection and caution are observable in all the Minister's proceedings, as exhibited in his speech: he has not only given reasons at length for every measure adopted by him, but he has argued why certain other measures which were likely to suggest themselves as alternatives to his, were not immediately advisable. He has done more than eschew fanciful or crotchety finance—he has left the impression that his proposals are the result of an anxious endeavour for the general good. It is gratifying to observe that in his remissions of burdens, he gives the first place to local taxation, not only because, as he said, it is at this time the object of the highest national interest, but because we at length begin to carry into effect the resolution of the late House of Commons, which, on the invitation of Sir Massey Lopes, it affirmed in 1872. The late Ministers were slow to deal with the subject, and, what was worse than that, they were expected to make any measure which they might propose in that regard to some extent penal, in retaliation for the presumption of the country party in carrying a resolution of that character in spite of them. The relief now proposed



to be afforded by the Imperial to the Local funds is, however, free from *animus*. A contribution is made to the expenses of Lunatics, and an augmented contribution to Police expenses, this being an earnest of further relief in the same direction when there shall have been opportunity of going deeper into the subject. A penny taken off the income-tax reduces that burden to the lowest pressure at which it has stood since its revival by Sir Robert Peel. The sense of the country is clearly against Mr Gladstone's sweeping idea of cancelling this important tax: it has never been proved that the tax can be dispensed with; but the relief now afforded attests the willingness of Government to deal with this source of revenue as far as it is safe to do so. The surrender of the sugar-duties was predicted last year as a consequence of Mr Lowe's ill-advised remission; we are happy to find it now defended, not on the ground that the sugar-duty was a tax on the poor man, but because the smallness of the amount made it scarcely worth the expense of collecting, and because the doing away with this attenuated branch of the revenue would give a stimulus to trade which is likely to produce more than an equivalent for the duty now extinguished. The remission of the tax on horses cannot prove other than a timely and sensible relief. The scarcity of those animals, which has lately been forced on our attention, and the high prices of forage and saddlery, show the change to be suitable and judicious.

We cannot but extol the self-command with which Sir Stafford Northcote refrained from at all emulating Mr Gladstone in the character of his Budget-speech. Had he done so, excuse might have been found for the attempt; for ever

since he received his seals, the Liberal press has been attempting to terrify him by anticipation of the miserable figure he would cut in comparison of "the greatest financial genius of the age." But he was not only content to forego rhetorical effect; he refrained from circumlocution in his statements, and used the simplest forms for his arithmetical calculations, instead of parading additions and subtractions as operations to be achieved by only the profoundest scientific processes. The clearness of the exposition, and the forcible, unadorned style in which the different points were presented, will already have told on the nation, and disabused it of the apprehension of a terrible critic shattering the miserable pretence of Conservative finance. The Budget is more likely to augment than to detract from Ministerial strength. And we must say a word in approval of the manliness which refused to take credit for the wish to benefit any particular class, or to melt and snivel over the hardships to which any portion of "our own flesh and blood" may be subject. We cannot but admire, too, the *sang froid* with which were rejected the pleasing theories about the balance of direct and indirect taxation, and the happy, nervous manner in which a healthier principle was propounded. The Chancellor's words on this point are worth quoting:—

"I do not think that it ought to be received as a canon of finance, that direct and indirect taxation ought always, or as a general rule, to be reduced *pari passu*. I do not think we can lay down any general rule, or that it is at all necessary, if we take off a million from the one, we must take off a million from the other. I see no principle in that. It may be convenient under certain circumstances. If we had a system of taxation so fairly balanced all

round, that if you take off taxation from part of it you would destroy the equilibrium, it would be well to take off some from the other parts. But we cannot say that our financial system is in that happy condition. (A laugh). The leading principle, in selecting remissions of taxation, is to consider in what direction you can do the most good without nicely regarding whether it affects direct or indirect taxation. You ought to ask who it is upon whom all these taxes fall. It is not on the consumer or the producer, or this interest or that, but really and truly the whole burden falls on the whole community —(hear)—and you should endeavour to make selections which will, on the whole, be most to the benefit of the public at large."

It is a long while since the House of Commons has heard such deliverances as this from a Minister of the Crown—honest, statesmanlike, independent. They are in perfect accord, too, with the passage in Mr Disraeli's speech to the working men of Glasgow, wherein he said that Conservatism favours no rank or class, but aims at benefiting equally the whole body of the people. We think, also, that there may be seen in this Budget evidences of a policy which is of some moment to the nation at large—a policy which, being honourable and manly, contrasts favourably with the insidious policy which would set class against class, and which flatters and favours any section of the community which may be thought for the moment to command the largest voting power. We trust that the electors will not fail to compare these opposite principles of Government, nor to congratulate themselves on the firm rejection which they lately gave to an offered bribe, and the votes by which they brought the authors of this Budget to power.

One of the first duties of the new

Administration has been to confer honours and rewards upon the brave officers and men who brought the Black War to such a satisfactory conclusion. It is not for us to say here how well and how hardly these distinctions were earned. The country thoroughly appreciates the service. But the sudden change of Ministry has prevented the public from becoming acquainted with some particulars which no doubt would have been put in a strong light had the late Ministers remained in office to answer before Parliament for their proceedings in respect of this expedition. The proverb, "All's well that ends well," will not always stand in the place of argument; for the good ending may have been reached by the valour and perseverance of the agents, in spite of gross incapacity and ignorance in planning, and of detrimental or useless instructions given by the designers to hamper the execution. Mr Gladstone stated in Parliament (what we can well believe) that "at the moment" (*i.e.*, of Sir Garnet Wolseley's departure) "we scarcely had what could be called a plan, in consequence of the varying information and the state of circumstances that were reported to us from day to day. I am bound to admit that, until Sir Garnet Wolseley reached the Gold Coast, the amount of information which we possessed, and which, of course, was to be the basis of any determination to be arrived at, was scanty—so much so that I might even call it deplorably scanty." Just so; but perhaps the public would like to know why the information was deplorably scanty. We have colonies in that region, and many officials; the trouble with Ashanti has been for a long time threatening; would it have been too much to expect that her Majesty's Ministers should have informed themselves a little



concerning a part of the world where ugly complications were becoming every day more difficult of solution? Mr Gladstone has virtually admitted what, we fancy, will be laid to the charge of his Government, as soon as histories of the Black War shall be published,—namely, that Sir Garnet Wolseley, and his gallant and devoted staff, were sent out unsupported by troops to make an experiment upon the climate, and try how long English constitutions could bear up under African malaria. If they had all died, as some of them did, what matter? They would by their deaths have proved that it was of no use to send a larger force there, and Ministerial information would no longer have been so lamentably scanty. This is the most extraordinary use to which we ever heard of a distinguished leader and a staff of picked officers being put! Again, although the information was so “deplorably scanty,” the Secretaries of State for the Colonies and for War thought proper to trammel the leader of the expedition with instructions. If they knew nothing about the country or its inhabitants, as Mr Gladstone admits that they did not, how could they possibly issue instructions adapted to the circumstances of the situation? It was almost a certainty that rules penned at home by Secretaries in their ignorance would prove to be no guide to a man on the spot, and able to judge for himself of the posture of affairs; and it was highly probable that the rules might prove simply ludicrous. Such they did prove. It is no wonder that Sir Garnet Wolseley, in a speech made since his return to England, said that if he had had a civil commissioner at his elbow he never should have got to Coomassie. He had only too good reason to know the retarding and paralysing power

of the ignorance of Liberal Secretaries of State fussing in London.

We are not surprised at any inconsistency which Mr Gladstone may exhibit; but there certainly is great inconsistency between his behaviour towards Russia and America, and his behaviour towards the savages on the Gold Coast. In the former cases, where the disputes, and the nations with whom those disputes originated, were perfectly well understood, and where our honour was involved, he simply submitted to the demands of his opponents, acting for those occasions according to the maxim of “peace at any price.” In the latter case, while possessing only “deplorably scanty” information about the place or the people (possibly about the quarrel also), he drew his weapon as rashly as on ordinary occasions he wags his tongue. We have every right to regard the Black War as a blunder throughout; for besides the admission of ignorance, which we have quoted from his speech in Parliament, we have also Mr Gladstone’s manifesto of January last, wherein he speaks of “the unhappy war on the Gold Coast,” and adds, “We shall, I hope, seek to draw from what has happened a lesson on the duty of avoiding in future the first entrance into equivocal and entangling engagements.” We thought the lesson had been learned only too well when we allowed the Treaty of Paris to be torn up, and consented to pay tribute to America. But it seems that it is necessary now, in Mr Gladstone’s opinion, to learn it over again. The war has ended fortunately for us, and Mr Gladstone is no longer in office—which are two reasons why much more may not be said in Parliament on the subject; yet the nation ought to understand and to remember that this war, which cost us many valuable lives and some

treasure, and which might, for aught its authors knew, have been as “deplorably” unfortunate as their information was. “scanty,” was rashly undertaken by the Radical Government, and ought to stand against them whenever again the Radical party may ask for the support of the country.

We have no desire to trumpet Mr Disraeli's Government as excelling in virtue and talent, while as yet it has had opportunity to say but little for itself. It is sufficient for us at present if the accession of the Conservatives has brought to the land a sense of security and repose. To have done this is a far greater and worthier achievement than to have set people by the ears with vigorous legislation, or to have perplexed every one with fear of change. So far the acts and sayings of Ministers have been graciously received by the country. The Budget has shown ability, and is likely to prove a success. Something more will, no doubt, be attempted before the Session is closed, but there will be opportunity for speaking of that hereafter. It may be said now that Conservative Government is fairly on its trial—a saying which, for very many years past, would not have been true. Conservative Ministries, since the repeal of the

Corn Laws, have taken office, not to be tried, but as condemned and sentenced already; not suffered to exhibit their policy, or allowed a patient hearing for their arguments. They have now come in at the distinct call of the people. There is nothing to impede their work, and they have the advantage of replacing rulers, who by many indiscretions have made themselves odious. We never doubted that such a favourable occasion would arrive, nor that the statesmen of our party would bear themselves becomingly, and render valuable service to the State when their time should come. We quite expect now that their administration will be thoroughly successful, but they have yet to justify our anticipations. Let them, however, be congratulated on the turn of fortune. After “working and waiting” so long and so patiently; after watching calmly while the Liberal flame burnt down to the socket,—they are at length afloat with a FAIR WIND. They have SET THEIR SAILS without noise or ostentation, but like men who know their work. Everything augurs well, and their friends express a hope as well as a wish when they cheer them with the cry of A GOOD VOYAGE!



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ALICE LORRAINE.

A TALE OF THE SOUTH DOWNS.

PART IV.—CHAPTER XIX.

THE excellent people of Coombe Lorraine as yet were in happy ignorance of all these fine doings on Hilary's part. Sir Roland knew only too well, of course, that his son and heir was of a highly romantic, chivalrous, and adventurous turn. At Eton and Oxford many little scrapes (which seemed terrible at the time) showed that he was sure to do his best to get into grand scrapes, as the occasion of his youthful world enlarged.

"Happen what will, I can always trust my boy to be a gentleman," his father used to say to himself, and to his only real counsellor, old Sir Remnant Chapman. Sir Remnant always shook his head; and then (for fear of having meant too much) said, "Ah, that is the one thing after all. People begin to talk a great deal too much about Christianity."

At any rate, the last thing they thought of was the most likely thing of all—that Hilary should fall in love with a good, and sweet, and

simple girl, who, for his own sake, would love him, and grow to him with all the growth of love. "Morality"—whereby we mean now, truth, and right, and purity—was then despised in public, even more than now in private life. Sir Remnant thought it a question of shillings, how many maids his son led astray; and he pitied Sir Roland for having a son so much handsomer than his own.

Little as now he meddled with it, Sir Roland knew that the world was so; and the more he saw of it, the less he found such things go down well with him. The broad low stories, and practical jokes, and babyish finesse of oaths, invented for the ladies—many of which still survive in the hypocrisy of our good tongue—these had a great deal to do with Sir Roland's love of his own quiet dinner-table, and shelter of his pet child, Alice. And nothing, perhaps, except old custom and the traditions of friendship, could have induced him to

bear, as he did, with Sir Remnant's far lower standard. Let a man be what he will, he must be moved one way or another by the folk he deals with. Even Sir Roland (though so different from the people around him) felt their feelings move here and there, and very often come touching him. And he never could altogether help wanting to know what they thought about him. So must the greatest man ever "developed" have desired a million-fold, because he lived in each one of the million.

However, there were but two to whom Sir Roland Lorraine ever yielded a peep of his deeply treasured anxieties. One was Sir Remnant; and the other (in virtue of office, and against the grain) was the Rev. Struan Hales, his own highly respected brother-in-law.

Struan Hales was a man of mark all about that neighbourhood. Everybody knew him, and almost everybody liked him. Because he was a genial, open-hearted, and sometimes even noisy man; full of life—in his own form of that matter—and full of the love of life, whenever he found other people lively. He hated every kind of humbug, all revolutionary ideas, methodism, asceticism, enthusiastic humanity, and exceedingly fine language. And though, like every one else, he respected Sir Roland Lorraine for his upright character, lofty honour, and clearness of mind; while he liked him for his generosity, kindness of heart, and gentleness; on the other hand, he despised him a little for his shyness and quietude of life. For the rector of West Lorraine loved nothing better than a good day with the hounds, and a roaring dinner-party afterwards. Nothing in the way of sport ever came amiss to him; even though it did—as no true sport does—depend for its joy upon cruelty.

Here, in his snug house on the glebe, under the battlement of the hills, with trees and a garden of comfort, and snug places to smoke a pipe in, Mr Hales was well content to live and do his duty. He liked to hunt twice in a week, and he liked to preach twice every Sunday. Still he could not do either always; and no good people blamed him.

Mrs Hales was the sweetest creature ever seen almost anywhere. She had plenty to say for herself, and a great deal more to say for others; and if perfection were to be found, she would have been perfection to every mind, except her own, and perhaps her husband's. The rector used to say that his wife was an angel, if ever one there were; and in his heart he felt that truth. Still he did not speak to her always, as if he were fully aware of being in colloquy with an angel. He had lived with her "ever so long," and he knew that she was a great deal better than himself; but he had the wisdom not to let her know it; and she often thought that he preached at her. Such a thing he never did. No honest parson would ever do it; of all mean acts it would be the meanest. Yet there are very few parsons' wives who are not prepared for the chance of it. And Mrs Hales knew that she "had her faults," and that Mr Hales was quite up to them. At any rate, here they were, and here they meant to live their lives out, having a pretty old place to see to, and kind old neighbours to see to them. Also they had a much better thing, three good children of their own; enough to make work and pleasure for them, but not to be a perpetual worry, inasmuch as they all were girls—three very good girls, of their sort—thinking as they were told to think, and sure to make excellent women.



Alice Lorraine liked all these girls. They were so kind, and sweet, and simple; and when they had nothing whatever to say, they always said it so prettily. And they never pretended to interfere with any of her opinions, or to come into competition with her, or to talk to her father, when she was present, more than she well could put up with. For she was a very jealous child; and they were well aware of it. And they might let their father be her mother's brother ten times over, before she would hear of any "Halesy element"—as she once had called it—coming into her family more than it had already entered. And they knew right well, while they thought it too bad, that this young Alice had sadly quenched any hopes any one of them might have cherished of being a Lady Lorraine some day. She had made her poor brother laugh over their tricks, when they were sure that they had no tricks; and she always seemed to put a wrong construction upon any little harmless thing they did. Still they could afford to forget all that; and they did forget it, especially now when Hilary would soon be at home again.

It was now July, and no one had heard for weeks from that same Hilary; but this made no one anxious, because it was the well-known manner of the youth. Sometimes they would hear from him by every post, although the post now came thrice in a week; and then again for weeks together, not a line would he vouchsafe. And as a general rule, he was getting on better when he kept strict silence.

Therefore Alice had no load on her mind at all worth speaking of, while she worked in her sloping flower-garden, early of a summer afternoon. It was now getting on for St Swithin's day; and the sun

was beginning to curtail those brief attentions which he paid to Coombe Lorraine. He still looked fairly at it, as often as clouds allowed in the morning, almost up to eight o'clock; and after that he could still see down it, over the shoulder of the hill. But he felt that his rays made no impression (the land so fell away from him), they seemed to do nothing but dance away downward, like a lasher of glittering water.

Therefore, in this garden grew soft and gently natured plants, and flowers of delicate tint, that sink in the exhaustion of the sun-glare. The sun, in almost every garden, sucks the beauty out of all the flowers; he stains the sweet violet even in March; he spots the primrose and the periwinkle; he takes the down off the heartsease blossom; he browns the pure lily of the valley in May; and, after that, he dims the tint of every rose that he opens: and yet, in spite of all his mischief, which of them does not rejoice in him?

The bold chase, cut in the body of the hill, has rugged sides, and a steep descent for a quarter of a mile below the house—the cleft of the chalk on either side growing deeper towards the mouth of the coombe. The main road to the house goes up the coombe, passing under the eastern scarp, but winding away from it here and there to obtain a better footing. The old house, facing down the hill, stands so close to the head of the coombe, that there is not more than an acre or so of land behind and between it and the crest, and this is partly laid out as a courtyard, partly occupied by out-buildings, stables, and so on, and the ruinous keep ingloriously used as a lime-kiln; while the rest of the space is planted in and out with spruce and birch trees, and anything that will grow there.

Among them winds a narrow outlet to the upper and open Downs—too steep a way for carriage-wheels, but something in appearance betwixt a bridle-path and a timber-track, such as is known in those parts by the old English name, a “bostall.”

As this led to no dwelling-house for miles and miles away, but only to the crown of the hills and the desolate tract of sheep-walks, ninety-nine visitors out of a hundred to the house came up the coombe, so that Alice from her flower-garden, commanding the course of the drive from the plains, could nearly always foresee the approach of any interruption. Here she had pretty seats under laburnums, and even a bower of jessamine, and a noble view all across the weald, even to the range of the North Downs; so that it was a pleasant place for all who love soft sward and silence, and have time to enjoy that very rare romance of the seasons—a hot English summer.

Only there was one sad drawback. Lady Valeria’s windows straightly overlooked this pleasant spot, and Lady Valeria never could see why she should not overlook everything. Beyond and above all other things, she took it as her own special duty to watch her dear grand-daughter Alice; and now in her eighty-second year she was proud of her eyesight, and liked to prove its power.

“Here they come again!” cried Alice, talking to herself or her rake and trowel; “will they never be content? I told them on Monday that I knew nothing, and they will not believe it. I have a great mind to hide myself in my hole, like that poor rag and bone boy. It goes beyond my patience quite to be cross-examined and not believed.”

Those whom she saw coming up the steep road at struggling and panting intervals, were her three good cousins from the Rectory—Caroline, Margaret, and Cecil Hales;

rather nice-looking and active girls, resembling their father in face and frame, and their excellent mother in their spiritual parts. The decorated period of young ladies, the time of wearing great crosses and starving, and sticking as a thorn in the flesh of mankind, lay as yet in the happy future. A parson’s daughters were as yet content to leave the parish to their father, helping him only in the Sunday-school, and for the rest of the week minding their own dresses, or some delicate jobs of pastry, or gossip.

Though Alice had talked so of running away, she knew quite well that she never could do it, unless it were for a childish joke; and swiftly she was leaving now the pretty and petty world of childhood, sinking into that distance whence the failing years recover it. Therefore, instead of running away, she ran down the hill to meet her cousins, for truly she liked them decently.

“Oh, you dear, how are you? How wonderfully good to come to meet us! Madge, I shall be jealous in a moment if you kiss my Alice so. Cecil—what are you thinking of? Why, you never kissed your cousin Alice.”

“Oh yes, you have all done it very nicely. What more could I wish?” said Alice; “but what could have made you come up the hill, so early in the day, dears?”

“Well, you know what dear mamma is. She really fancied that we might seem (now there is so much going on) really unkind and heartless, unless we came up to see how you were. Papa would have come; but he feels it so steep, unless he is coming up to dinner; and pony, you know—Oh she did such a thing! The wicked little dear, she got into the garden, and devoured £10 worth of the grand new flower, just introduced by the Duchess ‘Dallia,’ or ‘Dellia,’ I



can't spell the name. And mamma was so upset that both of them have been unwell ever since."

"Oh, Dahlias!" answered Alice, whose grapes were rather sour, because her father had refused to buy any; "flaunty things in my opinion. But Caroline, Madge, and Cecil, have you ever set eyes on my new rose?"

Of course they all ran to behold the new rose; which was no other than the "Persian yellow," a beautiful stranger, not yet at home. The countless petals of brilliant yellow folding inward full of light, and the dimple in the centre, shy of yielding inlet to its virgin gold, and then the delicious fragrance, too refined for random sniffers, — these and other delights found entry into the careless beholder's mind.

"It makes one think of astrologers," cried Caroline Hales; "I declare it does! Look at all the little stars! It is quite like a celestial globe."

"So it is, I do declare!" said Madge. But Cecil shook her head. She was the youngest, and much the prettiest, and by many degrees the most elegant of the daughters of the Rectory. Cecil had her own opinion about many things; but waited till it should be valuable.

"It is much more like a cowslip-ball," Alice answered, carelessly. "Come into my bower now. And then we can all of us go to sleep."

The three girls were a little hot and thirsty, after their climb of the chalky road; and a bright spring ran through the bower, as they knew, ready to harmonise with sherbet, sherry-wine, or even shrub itself, as had once been proved by Hilary.

"How delicious this is! How truly sweet!" cried the eldest and perhaps most loquacious Miss Hales; "and how nice of you always to keep a glass! A spring

is such a rarity on these hills; papa says it comes from a different stratum. What a stratum is, I have no idea. It ought to be straight, one may safely say that; but it always seems to be crooked. Now, can you explain that, darling Alice? You are so highly taught, and so clever!"

"Now, we don't want a lecture," said Madge, the blunt one; "the hill is too steep to have that at the top. Alice knows everything, no doubt, in the way of science, and all that. But what we are dying to know is what came of that grand old astrologer's business."

"This is the seventh or eighth time now," Alice answered, hard at bay; "that you will keep on about some little thing that the servants are making mountains of. My father best knows what it is. Let us go to his room and ask him."

"Oh no, dear! oh no, dear! How could we do that? What would dear uncle say to us? But come, now tell us. You do know something. Why are you so mysterious? Mystery is a thing altogether belonging to the dark ages, now. We have heard such beautiful stories that we cannot manage to sleep at night without knowing what they are all about. Now, do tell us everything. You may just as well tell us every single thing. We are sure to find it all out, you know; and then we shall all be down on you. Among near relations, dear mamma says, there is nothing to compare with candour."

"Don't you see, Alice," Madge broke in, "we are sure to know sooner or later; and how can it matter which it is?"

"To be sure," answered Alice, "it cannot matter. And so you shall all know, later."

This made the three sisters look a little at one another, quietly. And then, as a desperate resource,

Madge, the rough one, laid eyes upon Alice, and, with a piercing look, exclaimed, "You don't even understand what it means yourself!"

"Of course, I do not," answered Alice; "how many times have I told you so, yet you always want further particulars! Dear cousins, now you must be satisfied with a conclusion of your own."

"I cannot at all see that," said Caroline.

"Really, you are too bad," cried Margaret.

"Do you think that this is quite fair?" asked Cecil.

"You are too many for me, all of you," Alice answered, steadfastly. "Suppose I came to your house and pried into some piece of gossip about you that I had picked up in the village. Would you think that I had a right to do it?"

"No, dear, of course not. But nobody dares to gossip about us, you know. Papa would very soon stop all that."

"Of course he would. And because my father is too high-minded to meddle with it, am I to be questioned perpetually? Come in, Caroline, come in, Margaret, come in, dear Cecil; I know where papa is, and then you can ask him all about it."

"I have three little girls at their first sampler, such little sweets!" said Caroline; "I only left them for half an hour, because we felt sure you must want us, darling. It now seems as if you could hold your own in a cross-stitch we must not penetrate. It is nothing to us. What could it be? Only don't come, for goodness' sake, don't come rushing down the hill, dear creature, to implore our confidence suddenly."

"Dear creature!" cried Alice, for the moment borne beyond her young self-possession—"I am not quite accustomed to old women's

words. Nobody shall call me a 'dear creature' except my father (who knows better) and poor old Nanny Stilgoe."

"Now, don't be vexed with them," Cecil stopped to say in a quiet manner, while the two other maidens tucked up their skirts, and down the hill went, rapidly; "they never meant to vex you, Alice; only you yourself must feel how dreadfully tantalising it is to hear such sweet things as really made us afraid of our own shadows; and then to be told not to ask any questions!"

"I am sorry if I have been rude to your sisters," the placable Alice answered; "but it is so vexatious of them that they doubt my word so. Now, tell me what you have heard. It is wonderful how any foolish story spreads."

"We heard, on the very best authority, that the old astrologer appeared to you, descending from the comet in a fire-balloon, and warned you to prepare for the judgment-day, because the black-death would destroy in one night every soul in Coombe Lorraine; and as soon as you heard it you fainted away, and Sir Roland ran up and found you lying, as white as wax, in a shroud made out of the ancient gentleman's long foreign cloak."

"Then, beg cousin Caroline's pardon for me. No wonder she wanted to hear more. And I must not be touchy about my veracity, after lying in my shroud so long. But truly I cannot tell you a word to surpass what you have heard already; nor even to come up to it. There was not one single wonderful thing—not enough to keep up the interest. I was bitterly disappointed; and so, of course, was every one."

"Cousin Alice," Cecil answered, looking at her pleasantly, "you are different from us, or, at any rate,



from my sisters. You scarcely seem to know the way to tell the very smallest of small white lies. I am very sorry always; still I must tell some of them."

"No, Cecil, no. You need tell none; if you only make up your mind not to do it. You are but a very little older than I am, and surely you might begin afresh. Suppose you say at your prayers in the morning, 'Lord, let me tell no lie to-day!'"

"Now, Alice, you know that I never could do it. When I know that I mean to tell ever so many; how could I hope to be answered? No doubt I am a story-teller—just the same as the rest of us; and to pray against it, when I mean to do it, would be a very double-faced thing."

"To be sure it would. It never struck me in that particular way before. But Uncle Struan must know best what ought to be done in your case."

"We must not make a fuss of trifles," Cecil answered, prudently; "papa can always speak for himself; and he means to come up the hill to do it, if Mr Gate's pony is at home. And now I must run after them, or Madge will call me a little

traitor. Oh, here papa comes, I do declare. Good-bye, darling, and don't be vexed."

"It does seem a little too bad," thought Alice, as the portly form of the rector, mounted on a borrowed pony, came round the corner at the bottom of the coombe, near poor Bonny's hermitage—"a little too bad that nothing can be done without its being chattered about. And I know how annoyed papa will be, if Uncle Struan comes plaguing him again. We cannot even tell what it means ourselves; and whatever it means, it concerns us only. I do think curiosity is the worst, though it may be the smallest vice. He expects to catch me, of course, and get it all out of me, as he declared he would. But sharp as his eyes are, I don't believe he can have managed to spy me yet. I will off to my rockwork, and hide myself, till I see the heels of his pony going sedately down the hill again."

With these words, she disappeared; and when the good rector had mounted the hill, "Alice, Alice!" resounded vainly from the drive among the shrubs and flowers, and echoed from the ramparts of the coombe.

#### CHAPTER XX.

One part of Coombe Lorraine is famous for a seven-fold echo, connected by tradition with a tale of gloom and terror. Mr Hales, being proud of his voice, put this echo through all its peals, or chime of waning resonance. It could not quite answer, "How do you do?" with "Very well, Pat, and the same to you"—and its tone was rather melancholy than sprightly, as some echoes are. But of course a great deal depended on the weather, as well as on the time of day. Echo, for the most part, sleeps by day-

light, and strikes her gong as the sun goes down.

Failing of any satisfaction here, the Rev. Struan Hales rode on. "Ride on, ride on!" was his motto always; and he seldom found it fail. Nevertheless, as he rang the bell (which he was at last compelled to do), he felt in the crannies of his heart some wavers as to the job he was come upon. A coarse nature often despises a fine one, and yet is most truly afraid of it. Mr Hales believed that in knowledge of the world he was entitled to teach Sir

Roland ; and yet he could not help feeling how calmly any impertinence would be stopped.

The clergyman found his brother-in-law sitting alone, as he was too fond of doing, in his little favourite book-room, walled off from the larger and less comfortable library. Sir Roland was beginning to yield more and more to the gentle allurements of solitude. Some few months back he had lost the only friend with whom he had ever cared to interchange opinions, a learned parson of the neighbourhood, an antiquary, and an elegant scholar. And ever since that he had been sinking deeper and deeper into the slough of isolation and privacy. For hours he now would sit alone, with books before him, yet seldom heeded, while he mused and meditated, or indulged in visions mingled of the world he read of and the world he had to deal with. As no less an authority than Dr Johnson has it—"This invisible riot of the mind, this secret prodigality of being, is secure from detection, and fearless of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartment, shuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himself to his own fancy." And again—"This captivity it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful. To regain liberty, he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the Stoic precept, teach his desires to fix upon external things; he must adopt the joys and the pains of others, and excite in his mind the want of social pleasures and amicable communication."

Sir Roland Lorraine was not quite so bad as the gentleman above depicted; still he was growing so like him that he was truly sorry to see the jovial face of his brother-in-law. For his mind was set out

upon a track of thought, which it might have pursued until dinner-time. But, of course, he was much too courteous to show any token of interruption.

"Roland, I must have you out of this. My dear fellow, what are you coming to? Books, books, books! As if you did not know twice too much already! Even I find my flesh falling away from me, the very next day after I begin to punish it with reading."

"That very remark occurs in the book which I have just put down. Struan, let me read it to you."

"I thank you greatly, but would rather not. It is in Latin or Greek, of course. I could not do my duty as I do, if I did it in those dead languages. But I have the rarest treat for you; and I borrowed a pony to come and fetch you. Such a badger you never saw! Sir Remnant is coming to see it, and so is old General Jakes, and a dozen more. We allow an hour for that, and then we have a late dinner at six o'clock. My daughters came up the hill to fetch your young Alice to see the sport. But they had some blaze-up about some trifle, as the chittish creatures are always doing. And so pretty Alice perhaps will lose it. Leave them to their own ways, say I; leave them to their own ways, Sir Roland. They are sure to cheat us, either way; and they may just as well cheat us pleasantly."

"You take a sensible view of it, according to what your daughters are," Sir Roland answered, more sharply than he either meant or could maintain; and immediately he was ashamed of himself. But Mr Hales was not thin of skin; and he knew that his daughters were true to him. "Well, well," he replied; "as I said before, they are full of tricks. At their age and sex it must be so. But a better



and kinder team of maids is not to be found in thirteen parishes. Speak to the contrary who will."

"I know that they are very good girls," Sir Roland answered kindly; "Alice likes them very much; and so does everybody."

"That is enough to show what they are. Nobody ever likes anybody, without a great deal of cause for it. They must have their faults of course, we know; and they may not be quite butter-lipped, you know—still I should like to see a better lot, take them in and out, and altogether. Now you must come and see Fox draw that badger. I have ten good guineas upon it with Jakes; Sir Remnant was too shy to stake. And I want a thoroughly impartial judge. You never would refuse me, Roland, now?"

"Yes, Struan, yes; you know well that I will. You know that I hate and despise cruel sports. And it is no compliment to invite me, when you know that I will not come."

"I wish I had stayed at the bottom of the hill, where that young scamp of a boy lives. When will you draw that badger, Sir Roland, the pest of the Downs, and of all the county?"

"Struan, the boy is not half so bad as might be expected of him. I have thought once or twice that I ought to have him taught, and fed, and civilised."

"Send him to me, and I'll civilise him. A born little poacher! I have scared all the other poachers with the comtat; but the little thief never comes to church. Four pair of birds, to my knowledge, nested in John Gate's veitches, and hatched well, too, for I spoke to John—where are they? Can you tell me where they are?"

"Well, Struan, I give you the shooting, of course; but I leave it

to you to look after it. But it does seem too cruel to kill the birds, before they can fly, for you to shoot them."

"Cruel! I call it much worse than cruel. Such things would never be dreamed of upon a properly managed property."

"You are going a little too far," said Sir Roland, with one of his very peculiar looks; and his brother-in-law drew back at once, and changed the subject clumsily.

"The shooting will do well enough, Sir Roland; I think, however, that you may be glad of my opinion upon other matters. And that had something to do with my coming."

"Oh, I thought that you came about the badger, Struan. But what are these, even more serious matters?"

"Concerning your dealings with the devil, Roland. Of course, I never listen to anything foolish. Still, for the sake of my parish, I am bound to know what your explanation is. I have not much faith in witchcraft, though in that perhaps I am heterodox; but we are bound to have faith in the devil, I hope."

"Your hope does you credit," Sir Roland answered; "but for the moment I fail to see how I am concerned with this orthodoxy."

"Now, my dear fellow, my dear fellow, you know as well as I do what I mean. Of course there is a great deal of exaggeration; and knowing you so well, I have taken on myself to deny a great part of what people say. But you know the old proverb, 'No smoke without fire;' and I could defend you so much better, if I knew what really has occurred. And besides all that, you must feel, I am sure, that you are not treating me with that candour which our long friendship and close connection entitle me to expect from you."

"Your last argument is the only

one requiring any answer. Those based on religious, social, and even parochial grounds, do not apply to this case at all. But I should be sorry to vex you, Struan, or keep from you anything you claim to know in right of your dear sister. This matter, however, is so entirely confined to those of our name only, at the same time so likely to charm all the gossips who have made such wild guesses about it, and after all it is such a trifle except to a superstitious mind ; that I may trust your good sense to be well content to hear no more about it, until it comes into action—if it ever should do so."

"Very well, Sir Roland, of course you know best. I am the last man in the world to intrude into family mysteries. And my very worst enemy (if I have one) would never dream of charging me with the vice of curiosity."

"Of course not. And therefore you will be well pleased that we should drop this subject. Will you take white wine, or red wine, Struan? Your kind and good wife was quite ready to scold me, for having forgotten my duty in that, the last time you came up the hill."

"Ah, then I walked. But to-day I am riding. I thank you, I thank you, Sir Roland ; but the General and Sir Remnant are waiting for me."

"And, most important of all, the badger. Good-bye, Struan ; I shall see you soon."

"I hardly know whether you will or not," the rector answered testily ; "this is the time when those cursed poachers scarcely allow me a good night's rest. And to come up this hill, and hear nothing at the top ! It is too bad at my time of life ! After two services every Sunday, to have to be gamekeeper all the week !"

"At your time of life !" said Sir Roland, kindly : "why, you are the

youngest man in the parish, so far as life and spirits go. To-day you are not yourself at all. Struan, you have not sworn one good round oath !"

"Well, what can you expect, Roland, with these confounded secrets held over one ? I feel myself many pegs down to-day. And that pony trips so abominably. Perhaps, after all, I might take one glass of red wine before I go down the hill."

"It is a duty you owe to the parish. Now come, and let me try to find Alice to wait upon you. Alice is always so glad to see you."

"And I am always so glad to see her. How narrow your doors are in these old houses ! Those Normans must have been a skewer-shouldered lot. Now, Roland, if I have said anything harsh, you will make all allowance for me, of course ; because you know the reason."

"You mean that you are a little disappointed——"

"Not a bit of it. Quite the contrary. But after such weather as we have had, and nothing but duty, duty, to do, one is apt to get a little crotchety. What kind of sport can be got anywhere ? The landrail-shooting is over, of course, and the rabbits are running in families ; the fish are all sulky, and the water low, and the sea-trout not come up yet. There are no young hounds fit to handle yet ; and the ground cracks the heels of a decent hack. One's mouth only waters at oiling a gun ; all the best of the cocks are beginning to mute ; and if one gets up a badger-bait, to lead to a dinner-party, people will come, and look on, and make bets, and then tell the women how cruel it was ! And with all the week thus, I am always expected to say something new every Sunday morning !"

"Nay, nay, Struan. Come now ; we have never expected that of you. But here comes Alice from her gar-



dening work ! Now, she does look well ; don't you think she does ?”

“Not a rose in June, but a rose in May !” the rector answered gallantly, kissing his hand to his niece, and then with his healthy bright lips saluting her : “you grow more

and more like your mother, darling. Ah, when I think of the bygone days, before I had any wife, or daughters, things occur to me that never——”

“Go and bait your badger, Struan, after one more glass of wine.”

#### CHAPTER XXI.

Nature appears to have sternly willed that no man shall keep a secret. There is a monster here and there to be discovered capable of not even whispering anything ; but he ought to expect to be put aside in our estimate of humanity. And lest he should be so, the powers above provide him, for the most part, with a wife of truly fecund loquacity.

A word is enough on such parlous themes ; and the least said the soonest mended. What one of us is not exceedingly wise, in his own or his wife's opinion ? What one of us does not pretend to be as “reticent” as Minerva's owl, and yet in his heart confess that a secret is apt to fly out of his bosom ?

Nature is full of rules ; and if the above should happen to be one of them, it was illustrated in the third attack upon Sir Roland's secrecy. For scarcely had he succeeded in baffling, without offending, his brother-in-law, when a servant brought him a summons from his mother, Lady Valeria.

According to all modern writers, whether of poetry or prose, in our admirable language, the daughter of an earl is always lovely, graceful, irresistible, almost to as great an extent as she is unattainable. This is but a natural homage on the part of nature to a power so far above her ; so that this daughter of an Earl of Thanet had been, in every outward point, whatever is delightful. Neither had she shown any slackness in turning to the best ac-

count these notable things in her favour. In short, she had been a very beautiful woman, and had employed her beauty well, in having her own will and way. She had not married well, it is true, in the opinion of her compeers ; but she had pleased herself, and none could say that she had lowered her family. The ancestors of Lord Thanet had held in villeinage of the Lorraines, some three or four hundred years after the Conquest, until from being under so gentle a race they managed to get over them.

Lady Valeria knew all this ; and feeling, as all women feel, the ownership of her husband (active, or passive, whichever it be), she threw herself into the nest of Lorraine, and having no portion, waived all other obligation to parental ties. This was a noble act on her part, as her husband always said. He, Sir Roger Lorraine, lay under her thumb, as calmly as need be ; yet was pleased as the birth of children gave some distribution of pressure. For the lady ruled the house, and lands, and all that was therein, as if she had brought them under her settlement.

Although Sir Roger had now been sleeping, for a good many years, with his fathers, his widow, Lady Valeria, showed no sign of any preparation for sleeping with her mothers. Now in her eighty-second year, this lady was as brisk and active, at least in mind if not in body, as half a century ago she had been. Many good stories (and some even true) were

told concerning her doings and sayings in the time of her youth and beauty. Doings were always put first, because for these she was more famous, having the wit of ready action more than of rapid words perhaps. And yet in the latter she was not slack, when once she had taken up the quiver of the winged poison. She had seen so much of the world, and of the loftiest people that dwell therein—so far at least as they were to be found at the Court of George the Second—that she sat in an upper stratum now over all she had to deal with. And yet she was not of a narrow mind, when unfolded out of her creases. Her suite of rooms was the best in the house, of all above the ground-floor at least; and now she was waiting to receive her son, with her usual little bit of state. For the last five years she had ceased to appear at the table where once she ruled supreme; and the servants, who never had blessed her before, blessed her and themselves for that happy change. For she would have her due, as firmly and fairly (if not a trifle more so), as and than she gave the same to others, if undemanded.

In her upright seat she was now beginning—not to chafe, for such a thing would have been below her—but rather to feel her sense of right and duty (as owing to herself) becoming more and more grievous to her the longer she was kept waiting. She had learned long ago that she could not govern her son as absolutely as she was wont to rule his father; and having a clearer perception of her own will than of any large principles, whenever she found him immovable, she set the cause down as prejudice. Yet by feeling her way among these prejudices carefully, and working filial duty hard, and flying as a last resort to the stronghold of her many years,

she pretty nearly always managed to get her own way in everything.

But few of those who pride themselves on their knowledge of the human face would have perceived in this lady's features any shape of steadfast will. Perhaps the expression had passed away, while the substance settled inwards; but however that may have been, her face was pleasant, calm, and gentle. Her manner also to all around her was courteous, kind, and unpretending; and people believed her to have no fault, until they began to deal with her. Her eyes, not overhung with lid, but delicately set and shaped, were still bright, and of a pale blue tint; her forehead was not remarkably large, but straight and of beautiful outline; while the filaments of fine wrinkles took, in some lights, a cast of silver from snowy silkiness of hair. For still she had abundant hair, that crown of glory to old age; and like a young girl, she still took pleasure in having it drawn through the hands, and done wisely, and tired to the utmost vantage.

Sir Roland came into his mother's room with his usual care and diligence. She with ancient courtesy rose from her straight-backed chair, and offered him one little hand, and smiled at him; and from the manner of that smile he knew that she was not by any means pleased, but thought it as well to conciliate him.

"Roland, you know that I never pay heed," she began, with a voice that shook just a little, "to rumours that reach me through servants, or even allow them to think of telling me."

"Dear mother, of course you never do. Such a thing would be far beneath you."

"Well, well, you might wait till I have spoken, Roland, before you begin to judge me. If I listen to nothing I must be quite unlike all the other women in the world."



"And so you are. How well you express it! At last you begin to perceive, my dear mother, what I perpetually urge in vain—your own superiority."

What man's mother can be expected to endure mild irony, even half so well as his wife would?

"Roland, this manner of speech, —I know not what to call it, but I have heard of it among foreign people years ago,—whatever it is, I beg you not to catch it from that boy Hilary."

"Poetical justice!" Sir Roland exclaimed; for his temper was always in good control, by virtue of varied humour; "this is the self-same whip wherewith I scourged little Alice quite lately! Only I feel that I was far more just."

"Roland, you are always just. You may not be always wise, of course; but justice you have inherited from your dear father, and from me. And this is the reason why I wish to know what is the meaning of the strange reports, which almost any one, except myself, would have been sure to go into, or must have been told of long ago. Your thorough truthfulness I know. And you have no chance to mislead me now."

"I will imitate, though perhaps I cannot equal, your candour, my dear mother, by assuring you that I greatly prefer to keep my own counsel in this matter."

"Roland, is that your answer? You admit that there is something important, and you refuse to let your own mother know it!"

"Excuse me, but I do not remember saying anything about 'importance.' I am not superstitious enough to suppose that the thing can have any importance."

"Then why should you make such a fuss about it? Really, Roland, you are sometimes very hard to understand."

"I was not aware that I had made a fuss," Sir Roland answered, gravely; "but if I have, I will make no more. Now, my dear mother, what did you think of that extraordinary bill of Bottler's?"

"Bottler, the pigman, is a rogue," said her ladyship, peremptorily; "his father was a rogue before him; and those things run in families. But surely you cannot suppose that this is the proper way to treat the subject."

"To my mind a most improper way—to condemn a man's bill, on the ground that his father transmitted the right to overcharge!"

"Now, my dear son," said Lady Valeria, who never called him her son at all, unless she was put out with him, and her "dear son" only when she was at the extremity of endurance—"my dear son, these are sad attempts to disguise the real truth from me. The truth I am entitled to know, and the truth I am resolved to know. And I think that you might have paid me the compliment of coming for my advice before."

Finding her in this state of mind, and being unable to deny the justice of her claim, Sir Roland was fain at last to make a virtue of necessity, while he marvelled (as so many have done) at the craft of people in spying things, and espying them always wrongly.

"Is that all?" said Lady Valeria, after listening carefully; "I thought there must have been something a little better than that to justify you in making it such a mystery. Nothing but a dusty old document, and a strange-looking packet, or case like a squab! However, I do not blame you, my dear Roland, for making so small a discovery. The old astrologer appears to me to have grown a little childish. Now, as I keep to the old-fashioned hours, I will ask you to ring the bell for

my tea, and while it is being prepared you can fetch me the case itself and the document to examine."

"To be sure, my dear mother, if you will only promise to obey the commands of the document."

"Roland, I have lived too long, ever to promise anything. You shall read me these orders, and then I can judge."

"I will make no fuss about such a trifle," he answered, with a pleasant smile; "of course you will do what is honourable."

Surely men, although they deny so ferociously this impeachment, are open at times to at least a little side-

eddy of curiosity; Sir Roland, no doubt, was desirous to know what were the contents of that old case, which Alice had taken for a "dirty cushion," as it lay at the back of the cupboard in the wall; while his honour would not allow him comfortably to disobey the testator's wish. At the same time he felt, every now and then, that to treat such a matter in a serious light was a proof of superstition, or even childishness, on his part. And now, if his mother should so regard it, he was not at all sure that he ought to take the unpleasant course of opposing her.

#### CHAPTER XXII.

Sir Roland smiled at his mother's position, and air of stern attention, as he came back from his book-room with a small but heavy oaken box. This he placed on a chair, and, without any mystery, unlocked it. But no sooner had he flung back the lid and shown the case above described, than he was quite astonished at the expression of Lady Valeria's face. Something more than fear and terror, downright awe, as if at the sight of something supernatural, had taken the pale tint out of her cheeks, and made her fine forehead quiver.

"Dear mother, how foolish I am," he said, "to worry you with these trifles! I wish I had kept to my own opinion——"

"It is no trifle; you would have been wrong to treat it as a trifle. I have lived a long life, and seen many strange things; but this is the strangest of all of them."

For a minute or two she lay back, and was not fit to speak or be spoken to; only she managed to stop her son from ringing for her maid or the housekeeper. He had never beheld her so taken before, and

could scarcely make out her signs to him to fasten both doors of the drawing-room.

Like most men who are at all good and just, Sir Roland was prone to think softly and calmly, instead of acting rapidly; and now his mother, so advanced in years, showed less hesitation than he did. Recovering, ere long, from that sudden shock, she managed to smile at herself and at his anxiety about her.

"Now, Roland, I will not meddle with this formidable and clumsy thing. It seems to be closed most jealously. It has kept for two centuries, and may keep for two more, so far as I am concerned. But if it will not be too troublesome to you, I should like to hear what is said about it."

"In this old document, madam? Do you see how strangely it has been folded? Whoever did that knew a great deal more than now we know about folding."

"The writing to me seems more strange than the folding. What a cramped hand! In what language is it written?"

"In Greek, the old Greek char-



acter, and the Doric dialect. He seems to have been proud of his classic descent, and perhaps Dorian lineage. But he placed a great deal too much faith in the attainments of his descendants. Poor Sedley would have read it straight off, I daresay; but the contractions, and even some of the characters, puzzled me dreadfully. I have kept up, as you know, dear mother, whatever little Greek I was taught, and perhaps have added to it; but my old Hedericus was needed a great many times, I assure you, before I got through this queer document; and even now I am not quite certain of the meaning of one or two passages. You see at the head a number of what I took at first to be hieroglyphics of some kind or other; but I find that they are astral or sidereal signs, for which I am none the wiser, though perhaps an astronomer would be. This, for instance, appears to mean the conjunction of some two planets, and this——”

“Never mind them, Roland. Read me what you have made out of the writing.”

“Very well, mother. But if I am at fault, you must have patience with me, for I am not perfect in my lesson yet. Thus it begins:—

“Behold, ye men, who shall be hereafter, and pay heed to this matter. A certain Carian, noble by birth and of noble character, to whom is the not inglorious name, Agasicles Syennesis, hath lived not in the pursuit of wealth, or power, or reputation, but in the unbroken study of the most excellent arts and philosophies. Especially in the heavenly stars, and signs of the everlasting kosmos, hath he disciplined his mind, and surpassed all that went before him.’ There is nothing like self-praise, is there, now, dear mother?”

“I have no doubt that he speaks the truth,” answered the Lady Val-

eria: “I did not marry into a family accustomed to exaggerate.”

“Then what do you think of this? ‘Not only in intellect and forethought, but also in goodwill and philanthropy, modesty, and self-forgetfulness, did this man win the prize of excellence; and he it is who now speaks to you. Having lived much time in a barbarous island, cold, and blown over with vaporous air, he is no longer of such a sort as he was in the land of the fair afternoons. And there is when it is to his mind a manifest and established thing, that the gates of Hades are open for him, and the time of being no longer. But he holds this to be of the smallest difference, if only the gods produce his time to the perfect end of all the things lying now before him.’”

“How good, and how truly pious of him, Roland! Such a man’s daughter never could have had any right to run away from him.”

“My dear mother, I disagree with you, if he always praised himself in that style. But let him speak for himself again, as he seems to know very well how to do: ‘These things have not been said, indeed, for the sake of any boasting, but rather to bring out thoroughly forward the truth in these things lying under, as if it were a pavement of adamant. Now, therefore, know ye, that Agasicles, carefully pondering everything, has found, so to say the word, an end to accomplish and to abide in. And this is no other thing than to save the generations descended from him from great evil fortunes about to fall, by the ill-will of some divinity, at a destined time upon them. For a man of birth so renowned and lofty has not been made to resemble a hand-worker, or a runaway slave, but has many stars regarding him from many generations. And now he perceives that his skill and wisdom were not given

to him to be a mere personal adornment, but that he might protect his descendants to the remote futurity. To him, then—it having been revealed that in the seventh generation hence, as has often come to pass with our house, or haply in the tenth (for the time is misty), a great calamity is bound to happen to those born afar off from Syennesis—the sage has laboured many labours, though he cannot avert, at least to make it milder, and to lessen it. He has not, indeed, been made to know, at least up to the present time, what this bane will be, or whether after the second or after the third century from this period. But knowing the swiftness of evil chance, he expects it at the earlier time; and whatever its manner or kind may be, Agasicles in all his discoveries has discovered no cure for human evils, save that which he now has shut up in a box. This box has been so constructed that nothing but dust will meet the greedy eyes of any who force it open, in the manner of the tomb of Nitocris. But if it be opened with the proper key, and after the proper interval, when the due need has arisen—there will be a fairer sight than ever broke upon mortal eyes before.’

“There mother, now, what do you think of all that? I am quite out of breath with my long translation, and I am not quite sure of all of it. For instance, where he says——”

“Roland,” his mother answered quickly, “I am now much older than the prince, according to tradition, can have been. But I make no pretence to his wisdom, and I have reasons of my own for wondering. What have you done with the key of that case?”

“I have never seen it. It was not in the closet. And I meant to have searched throughout his room until I found out the meaning of this very crabbed postscript—‘That

fool, Memel, hath lost the key. It will cost me months to make another. My hands now tremble, and my eyes are weak. If there be no key found herewith, let it be read that Nature, whom I have vanquished, hath avenged herself. Whether, or no, have I laboured in vain? Be blest now, and bless me, my dear descendants.’”

“That appears to me,” said the Lady Valeria, being left in good manners by her son to express the first opinion, “to be of the whole of this strange affair the part that is least satisfactory.”

“My dear mother, you have hit the mark. What satisfaction can one find in having a case without a key, and knowing that if we force it open there will be nothing but dust inside? Not a quarter so good as a snuff-box. I must have a pinch, my dear mother, excuse me, while you meditate on this subject. You are far more indulgent in that respect than little Alice ever is.”

“All gentlemen take snuff,” said the lady; “who is Alice to lay down the law? Your father took a boxful three times in a week. Roland, you let that young girl take very great liberties with you.”

“It is not so much that I let her take them. I have no voice in the matter now. She takes them without asking me. Possibly that is the great calamity foretold by the astrologer. If not, what other can it be, do you think?”

“Not so,” she answered, with a serious air, for all her experience of the witty world had left her old age quite dry of humour; “the trouble, if any is coming, will not be through Alice, but through Hilary. Alice is certainly a flighty girl, romantic, and full of nonsense, and not at all such as she might have been if left more in my society. However, she never has thought it worth while to associate much with



her grandmother, the result of which is that her manners are unformed, and her mind is full of nonsense. But she has plenty, and (if it were possible) too much, of that great preservative, pride of birth. Alice may come to affliction herself, but she never will involve her family."

"Any affliction of hers," said Sir Roland, "will involve at least her father."

"Yes, yes, of course. But what I mean is the honour and rank of the family. It is my favourite Hilary, my dear, brave, handsome Hilary, who is likely to bring care on our heads, or rather upon your head, Roland; my time, of course, will be over then, unless he is very quick about it."

"He will not be so quick as that, I hope," Sir Roland answered, with some little confusion of proper sentiments; "although in that hotbed of mischief, London, nobody knows when he may begin. However, he is not in London at present, according to your friend Lady de Lampnor. I think you said you had heard so from her."

"To be sure, Mr Malahide told her himself. The dear boy has overworked himself so, that he has gone to some healthy and quiet place to recruit his exhausted energies."

"Dear me," said Sir Roland, "I could never believe it, unless I knew from experience, what a very little work is enough to upset him. To write a letter to his father, for instance, is so severe an exertion that he requires a holiday the next day."

"Now, Roland, don't be so hard upon him. You would apprentice him to that vile law, which is quite unfit for a gentleman. I am not surprised at his being overcome by such odious labour; you would not take my advice, remember, and put him into the only profession fit for

one of his birth—the army. Whatever happens, the fault is your own. It is clear, however, that he cannot get into much mischief where he is just now—a rural and quiet part of Kent, she says. It shows the innocence of his heart to go there."

"Very likely. But if he wanted change, he might have asked leave to come home, I think. However, we shall have him here soon enough."

"How you speak, Roland! Quite as if you cared not a farthing for your only son! It must be dreadfully galling to him, to see how you prefer that Alice."

"If he is galled, he never winces," answered Sir Roland, with a quiet smile; "he is the most careless fellow in the world."

"And the most good-natured, and the most affectionate," said Lady Valeria, warmly. "Nothing else could keep him from being jealous, as nine out of ten would be. However, I am tired of talking now, and on that subject I might talk for ever. Take away that case, if you please, and the writing. On no account would I have them left here. Of course you will lock them away securely, and not think of meddling with them. What is that case made of?"

"I can scarcely make out. Something strong and heavy. A mixture, I think, of shagreen and some metal. But the oddest thing of all is the keyhole. It is at the top of the cone, you see, and of the strangest shape, an irregular heptagon, with some rare complication of points inside. It would be next to impossible to open this case without shattering it altogether."

"I do not wish to examine the case, I wish to have it taken away, my son. There, there, I am very glad not to see it, although I am sure I am not superstitious. We shall do very well, I trust, without it. I

think it is a most extraordinary thing that your father never consulted me about the writing handed down to you. He must have been bound by some pledge not to do so. There, Roland, I am tired of the subject."

With these words, the ancient lady waved her delicate hand, and dismissed her son, who kissed her white forehead, according to usage, and then departed with case and parchment locked in the oaken box again. But the more he thought

over her behaviour, the more he was puzzled about it. He had fully expected a command to open the case, at whatever hazard; and perhaps he had been disappointed at receiving no such order. But above all, he wanted to know why his mother should have been taken aback, as she was, by the sight of these little things. For few people, even in the prime of life, possessed more self-command and courage than Lady Valeria, now advancing into her eighty-second year.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

At the top of the hill, these lofty themes were being handled worthily; while, at the bottom, little cares had equal glance of the democrat sun, but no stars allotted to regard them. In plain English,—Bonny and Jack were as busy as their betters. They had taken their usual round that morning, seeking the staff of life—if that staff be applicable to a donkey—in village, hamlet, and farmhouse, or among the lanes and hedges. The sympathy and goodwill between them daily grew more intimate, and their tastes more similar; so that it scarcely seemed impossible that Bonny in the end might learn to eat clover, and Jack to rejoice in money. Open air and roving life, the ups and downs of want and weal, the freedom of having nothing to lose, and the joyful luck of finding things—these, and perhaps a little spice of unknown sweetness in living at large on their fellow-creatures' labours, combined to make them as happy a pair as the day was long, or the weather good. In the winter—ah! why should we think of such trouble? Perhaps there will never be winter again.

At any rate, Bonny was sitting in front of the door of his castle (or rather in front of the doorway, be-

cause he was happy enough not to have a door), as proud and contented as if there could never be any more winter of discontent. He had picked up a hat in a ditch that day, lost by some man going home from his Inn; and knowing from his patron, the pigman Bottler, that the surest token of a blameless life is to be found in the hat of a man, the boy, stirred by the first heave of ambition, had put on this hat, and was practising hat-craft (having gone with his head as it was born hitherto), to the utter surprise, and with the puzzled protest, of his beloved donkey. It was a most steady church-going hat of the chimney-pot order (then newly imported into benighted regions, but now of the essence of a godly life all over this free country), neither was it such a shocking bad hat as a man would cast away, if his wife were near. For Bonny's young head it was a world too wide, but he had padded it with a black-bird's nest; and though it seemed scarcely in harmony with his rakish waistcoat, and bare red shanks (spread on the grass for exhibition, and starred with myriad furze and bramble), still he was conscious of a distinguished air, and



nodded to the donkey to look at him.

While these were gazing at one another, with free interchange of opinion, the rector of the parish, on his little pony, turned the corner suddenly. He was on his way home, at the bottom of the coombe, not in the very best temper perhaps, in spite of the sport in prospect; because Sir Roland had met so unkindly his kind desire to know things.

"What have you got on your lap, boy?" Mr Hales so strongly shouted, that sulky Echo pricked her ears; and "on your lap, boy," went all around.

Bonny knew well what was on his lap, a cleverly plaited hare-wire. Bottler had shown him how to do it, and now he was practising diligently, under the auspices of his first hat. Mr Hales was a "beak," of course; and the aquiline beak of the neighbourhood. Bonny had the honour of his acquaintance in that fierce aspect, and in no other. The little boy knew that there was a church, and that great people went there once a-week, for very great people to blow them up. But this only made him the more uneasy, to clap his bright eyes on the parson.

"Hold there! whoa!" called the Rev. Struan, as Bonny for his life began to cut away; "boy, I want to talk to you."

Bonny was by no means touched with this very fine benevolence. Taking, perhaps, a low view of duty, he made the ground hot, to escape what we now call the "sacerdotal office." But Struan Hales (unlike our parsons) knew how to manage the laity. He clapped himself and his pony, in no time, between Master Bonny and his hole, and then in calm dignity called a halt, with his riding-whip ready at his button-hole.

"It is, it is, it is!" cried Bonny, coming back with his head on his

chest, and meaning (in the idiom of the land) that now he was beaten, and would hold parley.

"To be sure it is!" the rector answered, keeping a good balance on his pony, and well pleased with his own tactics. He might have chased Bonny for an hour in vain, through the furze, and heather, and blackberries; but here he had him at his mercy quite, through his knowledge of human nature. To put it coarsely—as the rector did in his mental process haply—the bigger thief anybody is, the more sacred to him is his property. Not that Bonny was a thief at all; still, that was how Mr Hales looked at it. In the flurry of conscience, the boy forgot that a camel might go through the eye of a needle with less exertion than the parish incumbent must use to get into the Bonny-castle.

"Oh hoo, oh hoo, oh hoo!" howled Bonny, having no faith in clerical honour, and foreseeing the sack of his palace, and home.

"Give me that wire," said Mr Hales, in a voice from the depth of his waistcoat. "Now, my boy, would you like to be a good boy?"

"No, sir; no, sir; oh no, plaize, sir! Jack nor me couldn't bear it, sir."

"Why not, my boy? It is such a fine thing. Your face shows that you are a sharp boy. Why do you go on living in a hole, and poaching, and picking, and stealing?"

"Plaize, sir, I never steals nothin', without it is somethin' as don't belong to me."

"That may be. But why should you steal even that? Shall I go in, and steal your things now?"

"Oh hoo, oh hoo, oh hoo! Plaize, sir, I han't got nothin' for 'e to steal."

"I am not at all sure of that," said the rector, looking at the hermit's hole longingly; "a thief's den

is often as good as the bank. Now, who taught you how to make this snare? I thought I knew them all pretty well; but this wire has a dodge quite new to me. Who taught you, you young scamp, this moment?"

"Plaize, sir, I can't tell 'e, sir. Nobody taught me, as I knows on."

"You young liar, you couldn't teach yourself. What you mean is, that you don't choose to tell me. Know I must, and know I will, if I have to thresh it out of you." He had seized him now by his gorgeous waistcoat, and held the strong horse-whip over his back. "Now, will you tell, or will you not?"

"I 'ont, I 'ont. If 'e kills me, I 'ont," the boy cried, wriggling vainly, and with great tears of anticipation rolling down his sunburnt cheeks.

The parson admired the pluck of the boy, knowing his own great strength of course, and feeling that if he began to smite, the swing of his arm would increase his own wrath, and carry him perhaps beyond reason. Therefore he offered him one chance more. "Will you tell, sir, or will you not?"

"I 'ont tell; that I 'ont," screamed Bonny; and at the word the lash descended. But only once, for the smiter in a moment was made aware of a dusty rush, a sharp roar of wrath, and great teeth flashing under mighty jaws. And perhaps he would never have walked again if he had not most suddenly wheeled his pony, and just escaped a tremendous snap, well aimed at his comely and gartered calf.

"Ods bods!" cried the parson, as he saw the jackass (with a stretched-out neck, and crest erect, eyes flashing fire, and a lashing tail, and, worst of all terrors, those cavernous jaws) gathering legs for a second charge, like an Attic trireme, Phormio's own, backing water for the diecplus.

"May I be dashed," the rector shouted, "if I deal any more with such animals! If I had only got my hunting-crop; but, kuk, kuk, kuk, pony! Quick, for God's sake! Off with you!"

With a whack of full power on the pony's flanks, away went he at full gallop; while Jack tossed his white nose with high disdain, and then started at a round trot in pursuit, to scatter them more disgracefully, and after them sent a fine flourish of trumpets, to the grand old national air of hee-haw.

While the Rev. Struan Hales was thus in sore discomfiture fleeing away as hard as his pony could be made to go, and casting uneasy glances over one shoulder at his pursuer, behold, he almost rode over a traveller footing it lightly round a sudden corner of the lane.

"Why, Uncle Struan!" exclaimed the latter; "is the dragon of St Leonard's after you? Or is this the usual style of riding of the benefited clergy?"

"Hilary, my dear boy," answered the rector; "who would have thought of seeing you? You are come just in time to defend your uncle from a ravenous beast of prey. I was going home to bait a badger, but I have had a pretty good bait myself. Ah, you pagan, you may well be ashamed of yourself, to attack your clergyman!"

For Jack, perceiving the reinforcement, and eyeing the stout stick which Hilary bore, prudently turned on his tail and departed, well satisfied with his exploit.

"Why, Hilary, what has brought you home?" asked his uncle, when a few words had passed concerning Jack's behaviour. "Nobody expects you, that I know of. Your father is a mysterious man; but Alice would have been sure to tell me. Moreover, you must have walked all the way from the stage,



by the look of your buckles, or perhaps from Brighton even."

"No; I took the short cut over the hills, and across by way of Beeding. Nobody expects me, as you say. I am come on important business."

"And, of course, I am not to know what it is. For mystery, and for keeping secrets, there never was such a family."

"As if you did not belong to it, uncle!" Hilary answered, good-naturedly. "I never heard of any secrets that I can remember."

"And good reason too," replied the rector; "they would not long have been secrets, my boy, after they came to your ears, I doubt."

"Then let me establish my reputation by keeping my own, at any rate. But, after all, it is no secret, uncle. Only, my father ought to know it first."

"Alas, you rogue, you rogue! Something about money, no doubt. You used to condescend to come to me when you were at school and college. But now, you are too grand for the purse of any poor Sussex

rector. I could put off our badger for half-an-hour, if you think you could run down the hill again. I should like you particularly to see young Fox; it will be something grand, my boy. He is the best pup I ever had in all my life."

"I know him, uncle; I know what he is. I chose him first out of the litter, you know. But you must not think of waiting for me. If I come down the hill again, it will only be about eight o'clock for an hour's rabbit-shooting."

Since he first met Mabel Lovejoy, Hilary had been changing much, and in every way, for the better. Her gentleness, and soft regard, and simple love of living things (at a time when cruelty was the rule, and kindness the rare exception), together with her knowledge of a great deal more than he had ever noticed in the world around, made him feel, in his present vein of tender absence from her, as if he never could bear to see the baiting of any badger. Therefore he went on his way to his father, pitying all things that were tormented.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

Sir Roland Lorraine, in his little book-room, after that long talk with his mother, had fallen back into the chair of reflection, now growing more and more dear to him. He hoped for at least a good hour of peace to think of things, and to compare them with affairs that he had read of. It was all a trifle, of course, and not to be seriously dwelt upon. No man could have less belief in star, or comet, or even sun, as glancing out of their proper sphere, or orbit, at the dust of earth. No man smiled more disdainfully at the hornbooks of seers and astrologers; and no man kept his own firm doubtings to himself more carefully.

And yet he was touched, as nobody now would be in a case of that sort, perhaps, by the real grandeur of that old man in devoting himself (according to his lights) to the stars that might come after him. Of these the brightest now broke in; and the dreamer's peace was done for.

What man has not his own queer little turns? Sir Roland knew quite well the step at the door—for Hilary's walk was beyond mistake; yet what did he do but spread hands on his forehead, and to the utmost of all his ability—sleep?

Hilary looked at his male parent with affectionate sagacity. He had

some little doubts about his being asleep, or at any rate, quite so heartily as so good a man had a right to repose. Therefore, instead of withdrawing, he spoke.

"My dear father, I hope you are well. I am sorry to disturb you, but—how do you do, sir; how do you do?"

The schoolboy's rude answer to this kind inquiry—"None the better for seeing you"—passed through Hilary's mind, at least, if it did not enter his father's. However, they saluted each other as warmly as can be expected reasonably of a British father and a British son; and then they gazed at one another, as if it was the first time either had enjoyed that privilege.

"Hilary, I think you are grown," Sir Roland said to break the silence, and save his lips from the curve of a yawn. "It is time for you to give up growing."

"I gave it up, sir, two years ago; if the standard measures of the realm are correct. But perhaps you refer to something better than material increase. If so, sir, I am pleased that you think so."

"Of course you are," his father answered; "you would have grown out of yourself, to have grown out of pleasant self-complacency. How did you leave Mr Malahide? Very well? Ah, I am glad to hear it. The law is the healthiest of professions; and that your countenance vouches. But such a colour requires food after fifty miles of travelling. We shall not dine for an hour and a half. Ring the bell, and I will order something while you go and see your grandmother."

"No, thank you, sir. If you can spare the time, I should like to have a little talk with you. It is that which has brought me down from London in this rather unceremonious way."

"Spare me apologies, Hilary, because I am so used to this. It is a great pleasure to see you, of course, especially when you look so well. Quite as if there were no such thing as money—which happens to you continually, and is your panacea for moneyed cares. But would not the usual form have done—a large sheet of paper (with tenpence to pay), and, 'My dear father, I have no ready cash—your dutiful son, H. L.'?"

"No, my dear father," said Hilary, laughing in recognition of his favourite form; "it is a much more important affair this time. Money, of course, I have none, but still, I look upon that as nothing. You cannot say that I ever show any doubt as to your liberality."

"You are quite right. I have never complained of such diffidence on your part. But what is this matter far more important than money in your estimate?"

"Well, I scarcely seem to know," said Hilary, gathering all his courage, "whether there is in all the world a thing so important as money."

"That is quite a new view for you to take. You have thrown all your money right and left. May I hope that this view will be lasting?"

"Yes, I think, sir, that you may. I am about to do a thing which will make money very scarce with me."

"I can think of nothing," his father answered, with a little impatience at his prologues, "which can make money any scarcer than it always is with you. I know that you are honourable, and that you scorn low vices. When that has been said of you, Hilary, there is very little more to say."

"There might have been something more to say, my dear father, but for you. You have treated me always as a gentleman treats a younger gentleman dependent upon



him—and no more. You have exchanged (as you are doing now) little snap-shots with me, as if I were a sharpshooter, and upon a level with you. I am not upon a level with you. And if it is kind, it is not fair play.”

Sir Roland looked at him with great surprise. This was not like Hilary. Hilary, perhaps, had never been under fatherly control as he ought to be; but still, he had taken things easily as yet, and held himself shy of conflict.

“I scarcely understand you, Hilary,” Sir Roland answered, quietly. “If you have any grievance, surely there will be time to discuss it calmly, during the long vacation, which you are now beginning so early.”

“I fear, sir, that I shall not have the pleasure of spending my long vacation here. I have done a thing which I am not sure that you will at all approve of.”

“That is to say, you are quite sure that I shall disapprove of it.”

“No, my dear father; I hope not quite so bad as that, at any rate. I shall be quite resigned to leave you to think of it at your leisure. It is simply this—I have made up my mind, if I can obtain your consent, to get married.”

“Indeed!” exclaimed his father, with a smile of some contempt. “I will not say that I am surprised; for nothing you do surprises me. But who has inspired this new whim, and how long will it endure?”

“All my life!” the youth replied, with fervour and some irritation; for his father alone of living beings knew how to irritate him. “All

my life, sir, as sure as I live! Can you never believe that I am in earnest?”

“She must be a true enchantress so to have improved your character! May I venture to ask who she is?”

“To be sure, sir. She lives in Kent, and her name is Mabel Lovejoy, the daughter of Mr Martin Lovejoy.”

“Lovejoy! A Danish name, I believe; and an old one, in its proper form. What is Mr Martin Lovejoy by profession, or otherwise?”

“By profession he is a very worthy and long-established grower.”

“A grower! I fail to remember that branch of the liberal professions.”

“A grower, sir, is a gentleman who grows the fruits of the earth, for the good of others.”

“What we should call a ‘spade husbandman,’ perhaps. A healthful and classic industry—under the towers of CEbalia. I beg to be excused all further discussion; as I never use strong language. Perhaps you will go and enlist your grandmother’s sympathy with this loyal attachment to the daughter of the grower.”

“But, sir, if you would only allow me——”

“Of course; if I would only allow you to describe her virtues—but that is just what I have not the smallest intention of allowing. Let the wings of imagination spread themselves in a more favourable direction. This interview must close on my part with a suggestive (but perhaps self-evident) proposition. Hilary, the door is open.”

## THE POETS AT PLAY.

If we were not told it by the poets we should not all of us take so readily for granted that childhood was our happiest time. They are so entirely agreed upon it—however much they differ from one another in other matters—they are so unanimous here, that we accept it as true to a truism. “The heart of childhood is all mirth,” says the ‘Christian Year,’ and its generations of readers have echoed “of course” without asking each of himself if it were indeed so in his individual case. But whether it be true universally or no, it probably is true with the poets; and if so, then common consent derived from a common experience proves one point, that high animal spirits and exceptional vivacity are as essential to the making of a poet as what we call genius. Considering how exceedingly dismal is some of the poetry of the world, and on the other hand how much lively verse lacks every quality of true poetry, this may not be at once accepted. No doubt mere vivacity hurries many people into mistaking fervour of temperament for inspiration: like Doeg in the satire, who was

“Too warm on picking work to dwell,  
But fagoted his notions as they fell,  
And if they rhymed and rattled all was well.”

But the effort of giving harmonious voice to genuine inspiration cannot be sustained without a constitutional elation, a keen enjoyment in the exercise. Rhymes even will only run when the spirits are serene to gaiety. Verse would not be the accepted vehicle for effervescing gaiety if the writer did not show *himself* all alive with the delight of his theme. We do not think of Milton as a man of mirth, but spirits dance

and sparkle in “L’Allegro,” that perennial fount of cheerfulness. No doubt the temperament capable of exaltation to the point of rapture has its relapses, to be made excellent capital of when the cloud is blown over. But the vivacity which helps poets to make verses does not confine itself to this office. It belongs to their nature, often passing the bounds, and through excessive indulgence inducing reaction, but still there and part of themselves so long as they write poetry that deserves the name: though it is now not the common fashion of poets to own to this capacity for jollity as frankly as Prior in his epitaph upon himself—

“And alone with his friends, lord, how merry was he!”

No poetry is written in the dumps, though the remembrance and experience of this gloomy condition are fertile themes. Thus Coleridge in justifying the egotism of melancholy verse. “Why then write sonnets or monodies? Because they give me pleasure when perhaps nothing else could. After the more violent emotions of sorrow the mind demands amusement, and can find it in employment alone; but full of the late sufferings it can endure no employment not in some measure connected with them.”

Cowper, who might seem an instance against this view, is in reality a strong support of it: so long as he could keep the despondency of insanity at arm’s length, he was the cheerfulest of men. “I never could take a *little* pleasure in anything,” he writes; and his constitutional vivacity was such that, as a boy exulting in his strength and activity, and observing the evenness of his pulse, he began to entertain with no



small complacency a notion that perhaps he might never die. He was fully conscious of this vivacity as a stimulus, as when playfully addressing Lady Austen—

“But when a poet takes the pen,  
Far more alive than other men,  
He feels a gentle tingling come  
Down to his finger and his thumb.”

Wordsworth says—

“We poets begin our life in gladness,  
But thereof comes in the end satiety and  
madness.”

With Cowper they ran side by side, the one quite as marked as the other. Pleasure in his work contended with horror. “You remember,” he writes to his friend, “the undertaker’s dance in the Rehearsal, which they perform in crape hat-bands and black cloaks to the tune of Hob and Nob, one of the sprightliest airs in the world. Such is my fiddling and dancing.” So long as he could describe his despair in sapphics, and illustrate it in such harmonious stanzas as his “Castaway,” we detect pleasure of some sort in the exercise of his gift, just as we see it in Burns, “still caring, despairing,” in his beautiful ode. The two influences are in visible contention. Many poets have the stigma in a lesser degree of depression of spirits; but if they wrote well, it was when the incubus was shaken off. Johnson was, he used to say, miserable by himself, and hated going to bed; but while he could get people to sit up with him he exultingly enjoyed life, and constituted the life and inspiration of the company, which no desponding man can possibly be.

Gray is a genuine instance of a poet without this exceptional vivacity of temperament. He was witty and humorous, but habitually his spirits were in a low key, and the consequence was, no poet who got himself a name ever wrote so little. He had everything of a poet but

social instincts and animal spirits; but these deserted him wholly for long periods during which his muse was absolutely tongue-tied. When his friends urged him he answered, “It is indeed for want of spirits that my studies lie among the cathedrals, tombs, and ruins. At present I feel myself able to write a catalogue or to read a peerage-book or Millar’s *Gardeners’ Dictionary*, and am thankful there are such employments in the world.”

All this does not prevent the composition of poetry being the hardest work the mind can exercise itself upon: nor does the fact contradict its being the highest form of enjoyment. All vigorous intellectual pleasure needs to be worked up to with effect. We cannot read fine poetry which opens and revives in us a world of keen sensation without a degree of labour from which men too often shrink, preferring lower satisfactions more easily and lazily come by.

The poet, knowing what his real achievements cost him, never withholds them from the world of readers. We need expect no discoveries of this nature in the private records he leaves behind him, unless, like Wordsworth, he deliberately postpones the publication of some cherished manuscript till after his death. But if the gift of verse is a pleasure, it will be played with apart from solemn duty either to the world or the poet’s own fame. There will be amusement in adapting it to homely purposes—it will break out at odd times and in odd places, and be characteristic of the man often beyond what he designs for a larger and more critical audience. Whatever a man of genius writes because it pleases him to write it, will tell us something of himself; though it be but a direction to his printer, an invitation to dinner, or a receipt for the cook. These little

spurts of the Muse are quite distinct from the *vers de société* which amateurs turn off, whether easily or laboriously, as the best they can do—specimens of their powers in an unfamiliar field. They are especially not examples; we were never meant to see them; neither “reader” nor critic was in the poet’s mind, but something closer and more intimate. The most prosaic doggerel of the true poet stands on a different footing from the rhymes of a writer with whom verse is not a natural medium. He would not commit himself to it, but as the indulgence of some impulse which belongs to his poet nature. With his name attached—and this proviso is sometimes necessary, for we have not all the discrimination to detect the master-hand under the homely disguise—we see something that distinguishes it, and stamps his character upon it. An impulse of some kind drives him to express a thought in verse, because it is easier to convey it that way, because it wraps it up so as to allow of a thing being said which might have looked awkward, or bold, or egotistical in prose, or because it best expresses relief from a task or a burden. With the poet, verse is his natural medium for a good deal that the Muse is not generally invoked for; and we like to see how far verse is a language, not a task—to see the “numbers come” on any stimulus. There are poets who never willingly wrote a careless line. Crabbe might have been thought one of these—so careful, so measured, so little egotistical; but we once find him indulging in the repetition of some verses which he acknowledged were not of the most brilliant description, but favourites, because they had amused the irksome restraint of life as chaplain in a great house:—

“Oh! had I but a little hut,  
That I might hide my head in;

Where never guest might dare molest  
Unwelcome or forbidden.  
I’d take the jokes of other folks,  
And mine should then succeed ’em;  
Nor would I chide a little pride,  
Nor heed a little freedom.”

With Wordsworth every verse was a brick in the temple his life was building; he would have thought it profanation to despatch an ephemeral jingling joke by post and keep no record. Consequently we have no example of verse from him inspired by the humour of the moment, written on a subject not poetical. But take Sir Walter Scott’s correspondence with James Ballantyne as a specimen of what we mean; he suits as an early example, for very rarely are rhymes strung together as he strung them, literally for only one ear, or indeed only for his own; so heartily careless of his poetical credit. Though not poetry, what a great deal these jingling lines tell us of a poet; how they let us into the character and feeling of the man! How much there is that he would not, and perhaps could not, have unveiled in prose! It is through such effusions that we learn something of him as author, about which he was so reticent. After finishing ‘Paul’s Letters to his Kinsfolk,’ on whose name he plays somewhat carelessly, we see the ‘Antiquary’ in his mind’s eye:—

“Dear James—I’m done, thank God,  
with the long yarns  
Of the most prosy of apostles—Paul;  
And now advance, sweet heathen of Monkbarns,  
Step out, old quiz, as fast as I can  
scrawl.”

In simple prose he would never have betrayed this confidence and fondness for any creature of his imagination. He thus rejoices over the completion of ‘Rob Roy:’—

“With great joy  
I send you Roy;  
’Twas a tough job,  
But we’re done with Rob;”



the "tough job," referring to the agonies of cramp and the lassitude of opium under which the novel was written. He was the most patient of men under interruption; only in verse does he indulge in a murmur, his temper really worn to a hair's-breadth:—

"Oh James, oh James, two Irish dames  
Oppress me very sore:  
I groaning send one sheet I've penn'd,  
For, hang them, there's no more."

In momentary discouragement, when 'Quentin Durward' did not go off at the rate anticipated, "he did not sink under the short-lived frown," but consoled himself with a couplet—

"The mouse who only trusts to one poor  
hole,  
Can never be a mouse of any soul."

When overwhelmed with books, preparatory to his life of Buonaparte, he thus condenses his experience, and blesses himself in prospect of his gigantic task:—

"When with poetry dealing,  
Room enough in a shieling,  
Neither cabin nor hovel  
Too small for a novel;  
Though my back I should rub  
On Diogenes' tub,  
How my fancy could prance  
In a dance of romance;  
But my house I must swap  
With some Brobdingnag chap,  
Ere I grapple, God bless me, with Em-  
peror Nap."

When adversity came, the slipshod muse was his confidant, the depository of his resolutions, cheering him onward in the untried stony path of authorship under compulsion,—the inexorable demand of duty. After soliloquies which would have done credit, both in matter and manner, to Shakespeare's fallen kings, we find him writing—

"I have finished my task this morning at half-past eleven, easily, early, and I think not amiss. I hope J. B. will make some notes of admiration!!! otherwise I shall be disappointed. If

this work answers—if it *but* answers, it must set us on our legs; I am sure worse trumpery of mine has had a great run. I remember with what great difficulty I was brought to think myself anything better than common, and now I will not in mere faintness of heart give up hope. So hey for a Swiftianism—

I loll in my chair  
And around me I stare,  
With a critical air,  
Like a calf in a fair;  
And, say I, Mrs Duty,  
Good-morrow to your beauty,  
I kiss your sweet shoe-tie,  
And hope I can suit ye.

Fair words butter no parsnips, says Duty: don't keep talking then, but go to your work again; there's a day's task before you—the siege of Toulon. Call you that a task? hang me, I'll write it as fast as Bony carried it on!—

And long ere dinner time I have  
Full eight close pages wrote;  
What, Duty, hast thou now to crave?  
Well done, Sir Walter Scott."

These dialogues with his conscience could hardly have been recorded without the playful veil of verse to hide their deep seriousness of self-sacrifice and atonement. Who can grudge him his escape to the country from the uncongenial scene of them celebrated in these valedictory lines?—

"So good-bye, Mrs Brown,  
I am going out of town,  
Over dale, over down,  
Where bugs bite not,  
Where lodgers fight not,  
Where below you chairmen drink not,  
Where beside you gutters stink not;  
But all is fresh, and clear, and gay,  
And merry lambkins sport and play."

Scott wrote too easily to value himself on his gifts, or to be very sensitive to criticism. The poet jealous of his reputation, fastidious on his own account, or keenly hurt by adverse opinion, would never commit himself thus, even to the privacy of his diary, secured by lock and key. It thus illustrates a very marked characteristic. We can hardly fancy Waller, who, somebody said,

spent a whole summer in correcting ten lines—those written in the Tasso of the Duchess of York—disporting himself in this way.

Scott here is addressing himself. The poet playing with his gift more commonly adopts the epistolary form, and compliments a friend with some facile careless specimen of his art. We do not want the amusement to become general out of the charmed circle; but where once a name is won, a tribute of verse is felt to be a real token of friendship, and treasured among the most flattering of compliments, as a private communication from Parnassus; especially when it illuminates some grave subject, or assumes an unexpected form, in which the poet selects you as the recipient of a new and choice conceit.

It must have been a delightful discovery to the diplomatist when Canning's Despatch first unfolded itself to eye and ear. And that Canning was a universal genius does not prevent the writer of the Anti-Jacobin and the famous Pitt lyric, "The Pilot that Weathered the Storm," being a poet in especial. Canning's general principle, it should be explained, was, that commerce flourished best when wholly unfettered by restrictions; but as modern nations had grown up under various systems, he judged it necessary to discriminate in the application of the principle; hence the Reciprocity Act placing the ships of foreign States importing articles into Great Britain on the same footing of duties as British ships, provided our ships were treated by the same rule in their turn; reserving, however, a retaliative power of imposing increased duties when the principle was resisted or evaded, as it was in the case of Holland—M. Falck, the Dutch Minister, having made a one-sided proposition, much to the advantage of his own country.

A tedious negotiation dragging on from month to month ensued, without arriving one step nearer consummation; at last Canning's patience was exhausted. Sir Charles Bagot, our ambassador at the Hague, was one day (as we are told) attending at Court when a despatch in cipher was hastily put into his hand; it was very short, and evidently very urgent, but unfortunately Sir Charles not expecting such a communication, had not the key of the cipher with him. An interval of intense anxiety followed, until he could obtain the key, when, to his infinite astonishment, he deciphered the following despatch from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:—

"In matters of commerce, the fault of the Dutch

Is giving too little and asking too much;  
With equal advantage the French are content,

So we'll clap on Dutch bottoms a twenty per cent.

Twenty per cent,

Twenty per cent,

Nous frapperons Falck with twenty per cent.

GEORGE CANNING."

Tom Moore, subsequently meeting this M. Falck when ambassador at our Court, calls him a fine sensible Dutchman. Whether he ever knew the form in which the tables were turned upon him is nowhere stated. Surprise constitutes some of the fun and attraction of a very different rhymed letter, where Cowper fills a sheet—prose alike in aspect and matter—with a flow of the most ingenious and facile rhymes. It shows remarkable mastery over words; and the little turns of humour, the playing with his own serious aims and with his friend's gravity of calling and reputation, are pleasantly characteristic of the man. The letter is long, but does not admit of curtailment, and the lurking rhymes keep up the reader's vigilance and attention.



"July 12, 1781.

"To the Rev. JOHN NEWTON.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I am going to send, what when you have read, you may scratch your head, and say I suppose, there's nobody knows whether what I have got, be verse or not: by the tune and the time, it ought to be rhyme; but if it be, did you ever see, of late or of yore, such a ditty before? The thought did occur to me and to her, as Madam and I, did walk and not fly, over hills and dales, with spreading sails, before it was dark to Weston Park.

"The news at *Oney* is little or none, but such as it is, I send it—viz., poor Mr Peace cannot yet cease, addling his head with what you have said, and has left Parish Church quite in the lurch, having almost sworn, to go there no more.

"Page and his wife, that made such a strife, we met them twain, in Dog Lane; we gave them the wall, and that was all. For Mr Scott, we have seen him not, except as he pass'd in a wonderful haste, to see a friend, in Silver End. Mrs Jones proposes, ere July closes, that she and her sister and her Jones Mister, and we that are here, our course shall steer, to dine in the Spinney; but for a guinea, if the weather should hold, so hot and so cold, we had better by far, stay where we are. For the grass there grows, while nobody mows, (which is very wrong), so rank and long, that so to speak, 'tis at least a week, if it happens to rain, ere it dries again.

"I have writ 'Charity,' not for popularity, but as well as I could, in hopes to do good; and if the Reviewer should say 'to be sure, the gentleman's muse wears Methodist shoes; you may know by her pace, and talk about grace, that she and her bard have little regard, for the taste and fashions and ruling passions, and hoidening play of the modern day; and though she assume a borrowed plume, and now and then wear a tittering air, 'tis only her plan, to catch if she can, the giddy and gay, as they go that way, by a production on a new construction. She has baited her trap, in hopes to snap all that may come, with a sugar-plum.' His opinion in this, will not be amiss; 'tis what I intend, my principal end: and

if I succeed, and folks should read, till a few are brought to a serious thought, I shall think I am paid, for all I have said, and all I have done, though I have run, many a time, after a rhyme, as far as from hence, to the end of my sense, and by hook or crook, write another book, if I live and am here, another year.

"I have heard before, of a room with a floor, laid upon springs, or suchlike things, with so much art in every part, that when you went in, you were forced to begin a minuet pace with an air and a grace, swimming about, now in now out, with a deal of state, in a figure of eight, without pipe or string, or any such thing; and now I have writ, in a rhyming fit, what will make you dance, and as you advance, will keep you still, though against your will, dancing away, alert and gay, till you come to an end, of what I have penn'd; which that you may do, ere Madam and you are quite worn out, with jiggling about, I take my leave, and here you receive, bow profound, down to the ground, from your humble me,

W. C.

"P.S.—When I concluded, doubtless you did think me right, as well you might, in saying what I said of Scott; and then it was true, but now it is due, to him to note, that since I wrote, himself and he has visited we."

This was written in a poetical year, when verse and matter crowded upon him. After finishing "Table Talk," we find him resolving to hang up his harp for the remainder of the year, and—

"Since eighty-one has had so much to do,  
Postpone what yet is left for eighty-two."

Charles Lamb and Cowper are as little associated in our minds as poets can well be; but there were points, especially of temperament, in common, and the Muse was a handmaid to them both; they each liked to adapt her to domestic uses. Cowper acknowledged homely favours by giving a verse for a dish of fish, apostrophising a halibut in high-sounding blank verse, and ex-

plaining in neatly-turned heroics how the barrel of oysters was delayed on the road by the imprudent kindness of paying the carriage beforehand. Charles Lamb asked a favour through the same medium :—

“TO WILLIAM AYRTON, Esq.

“My dear friend,  
Before I end  
Have you any  
More orders for Don Giovanni  
To give  
Him that doth live  
Your faithful Zany?

Without raiillery  
I mean Gallery  
Ones;

For I am a person that shuns  
All ostentation,  
And being at the top of the fashion,  
And seldom go to operas  
But *in formâ pauperis*.

I go to the play  
In a very economical sort of a way,  
Rather to see  
Than be seen,  
Though I am no ill sight  
Neither  
By candle light  
And in some kinds of weather.  
You might pit me  
For height  
Against Kean;  
But in a grand tragic scene  
I'm nothing;  
It would create a kind of loathing  
To see me act Hamlet;  
There'd be many a damn let

Fly  
At my presumption  
If I should try,  
Being a fellow of no gumption.

By the way, tell me candidly how you  
relish

This which they call  
The lapidary style?  
Opinions vary.

The late Mr Mellish  
Could never abide it;  
He thought it vile  
And coxcombical.

My friend, the poet-laureate,  
Who is a great lawyer at  
Anything comical,

W the first who tried it;  
But Mellish could never abide it:

But it signifies very little what Mellish  
said,

Because he is dead.”

&c. &c.

It does not seem, by the way, to have been Southey's turn, however much he played with fantastic measures, to versify for the amusement of his friends alone. All his composition—even his fun—had its destination for the press; but we find him slipping into rhythm to his friend Bedford :—

“How mortifying is this confinement of yours! I had planned so many pleasant walks to be made so much more pleasant by conversation; For I have much to tell thee, much to say  
Of the odd things we saw upon our journey—  
Much of the dirt and vermin that annoyed us.”

Charles Lamb was never careless or rapid. It was his amusement to play with his thoughts. The labour of investing a quaint fancy in fit wording was his pleasure. As in many other sports, the fun lay in the dressing. In fact, all that was characteristic in his mind needed exact expression; and now and then verse comes in to give the last point, as, after denouncing a cold spring, and May chilled by east winds, he concludes—

“Unmeaning joy around appears,  
And Nature smiles as though she sneers.”

In complete contrast to this is the rapidity of Scott's habits of composition. His domestic verse has all the air of extempore. He seems to have considered it a duty to his chief to retain the minstrel character in his letters. In them he liked to exercise his pen in unfamiliar measures, proving how easy they all were to him. Canning had told him that if he liked he could emulate Dryden in heroics, his letter from Zetland beginning—



"Health to the chieftain from his clans-  
man true ;  
From her true minstrel health to fair  
Bueclough—  
Health from the isles where dewy Morning  
weaves  
Her chaplet with the tints that Twilight  
leaves"—

is a very happy experiment in them ; but his account of the sea-serpent in dancing anapaests better suits our purpose, as bearing also upon the late reappearance of that tantalising fable. He writes from Kirkwall—

"We have now got to Kirkwall, and  
needs I must stare  
When I think that in verse I have once  
called it fair."

He dates August the 13th, 1814.

"In respect that your Grace has commis-  
sioned a Kraken,  
You will please be informed that they  
seldom are taken ;  
It is January two years, the Zetland folks  
say,  
Since they saw the last Kraken in Scal-  
loway Bay.  
He lay in the offing a fortnight or more,  
But the devil a Zetlander put from the  
shore,  
Though bold in the seas of the North to  
assail  
The morse and the sea-horse, the grampus  
and whale.  
If your Grace thinks I'm writing the  
thing that is not,  
You may ask at a namesake of ours—  
Mr Scott  
(He's not from our clan, though his merits  
deserve it ;  
He springs, I'm informed, from the Scotts  
of Scotstarvit) ;  
He questioned the folks who beheld it  
with eyes,  
But they differed confoundedly as to its  
size.  
For instance, the modest and diffident  
swore  
That it seemed like the keel of a ship,  
and no more ;  
Those of eyesight more clear, or of fancy  
more high,  
Said it rose like an island 'twixt ocean  
and sky—  
But all of the hulk had a steady opinion,  
That 'twas sure a *live* subject of Nep-  
tune's dominion ;

And I think, my Lord Duke, your Grace  
hardly would wish  
To cumber your house such a kettle of  
fish."

&c. &c.

Verse in such easy hands is a very useful instrument for turning a disagreeable incident into a joke, the poet can be imperious in it without giving offence, apologetic without meanness or servility. Thus in Lockhart's unlucky false quantity which made such a stir over Maida's grave, James Ballantyne had run off post-haste with the epitaph thinking it Scott's, and printed it with an additional blunder of his own. All the newspapers twitted the supposed author, and Lockhart properly desired that the blame should lie on the right shoulders. Scott, however, cared much more for the reputation of his son-in-law, the author of 'Valerius,' than his own, and rattled off an epistle to Lockhart with many reasons for letting the matter rest, of which the third is—

"Don't you perceive that I don't care a  
buddle,  
Although fifty false metres were flung at  
my noddle ;  
For my back is as broad and as hard as  
Benlomon's,  
And I treat as I please both the Greeks  
and the Romans ;  
And fourthly and lastly, it is my good  
pleasure  
To remain the sole source of that murder-  
ous measure.  
So *stet pro ratione voluntas*—be tractile,  
Invade not, I say, my own dear little  
dactyl ;  
If you do, you'll occasion a break in our  
intercourse.  
To-morrow will see me in town for the  
winter course,  
But not at your door at the usual hour,  
sir,  
My own pye-house daughter's good prog  
to devour, sir ;  
Ergo—peace, on your duty, your squeam-  
ishness throttle,  
And we'll soothe Priscian's spleen with a  
canny third bottle ;  
A fig for all dactyls, a fig for all spondees,  
A fig for all dunces and Dominie Grundys."  
&c. &c.

We do not often catch him taking the high line about himself that really lies hidden under this disparagement of his scholarship. Tom Moore has recourse to the epistolary Muse under a very different mortification; though there may be many tingling sensations after giving a bad dinner near akin to the discovery of being even party to a false quantity. The man in both cases feels lowered, and has to give himself a fillip to reinstate himself in his own good opinion. The dinner in question seems to have been an utter breakdown; and where Luttrell and brother epicureans were the guests, all can sympathise in the mishap; while it is only given to poets to express in becoming terms a consciousness of disaster. Prose apologies in such cases are heavy aggravations of the original ill-usage. Moore sitting down after seeing his guests off, aided by his lantern, and soothing his spirits by an imitation of Horace, might be glad he was a poet; for what trouble does not in a degree dissipate itself under neat definition?

"That bard had brow of brass, I own,  
 Who first presumed, the hardened sinner,  
 To ask fine gentlemen from town  
 To come and eat a wretched dinner;  
 Who feared not leveret, black as soot,  
 Like roasted Afric at the head set,  
 And making towards the duck at foot,  
 The veteran duck, a sort of dead set;  
 Whose nose could stand such ancient fish  
 As that we at Devizes purvey—  
 Than which, I know no likelier dish  
 To turn one's stomach topsy-turvy."  
 &c. &c.

Luttrell himself could turn a verse, and was no doubt recompensed in some degree by the opportunity afforded for airing his talent, owning indeed that "your cook was no dab at her duty," but making the answering line "end with poetry, friendship, and beauty."

"And then to increase our delight  
 To a fulness all boundaries scorning,

We were cheered by your lantern at night,  
 And regaled with your rhymes the next morning."

We must go back to an earlier date to find dinners a cheerful subject for the poet's muse. When a couple of dishes furnished a table to which it was not unbecoming to invite a lord, Matthew Prior could gaily extemporise an invitation to Harley; with no fears of a *contre-temps* when a joint of mutton and a ham supplied the board:—

"AN EXTEMPORE INVITATION TO THE  
 EARL OF OXFORD, HIGH TREASURER,  
 1712.

"My Lord,—  
 Our weekly friends to-morrow meet  
 At Matthew's palace in Duke Street,  
 To try, for once, if they can dine  
 On bacon-ham and mutton-chine.  
 If, wearied with the great affairs  
 Which Britain trusts to Harley's cares,  
 Thou, humble statesman, may'st descend  
 Thy mind one moment to unbend,  
 To see thy servant from his soul  
 Crown with thy health the sprightly bowl;  
 Among the guests which e'er my house  
 Received, it never can produce  
 Of honour a more glorious proof—  
 Though Dorset used to bless the roof."

And when Gay versified the receipt for stewed veal, we may take for granted that the dish so glorified would not be lost in a crowd of rival candidates for favour, but was, no doubt, a crowning attraction of the occasion. "As we cannot enjoy anything good without your partaking of it," he writes to Swift, "accept of the following receipt for stewed veal:—

"The receipt of the veal of Monsieur Davaux, Mr Pulteney's cook, and it hath been approved of at one of our Twickenham entertainments. The difficulty of the saucepan I believe you will find is owing to a negligence in perusing the manuscript. If I remember right, it is there called a stewpan. Your earthen vessel, provided it is close-topped, I allow to be a good *succedaneum*:—

"Take a knuckle of veal—  
 You may buy it, or steal;



In a few pieces cut it,  
 In the stewing-pan put it.  
 Salt, pepper, and mace  
 Must season this knuckle;  
 Then what's joined to a place \*  
 With other herbs muckle,  
 That which killed King Will,†  
 And what never‡ stands still;  
 Some sprigs of that bed  
 Where children are bred;—  
 Which much you will mend if  
 Both spinnage and endive,  
 And lettuce and beet,  
 With marygold meet,—  
 Put no water at all,  
 For it maketh things small;  
 Which, lest it should happen,  
 A close cover cap on.  
 Put this pot of Wood's metal §  
 In a hot boiling kettle,  
 And there let it be  
 (Mark the doctrine I teach)  
 About—let me see—  
 Thrice as long as you preach. ||  
 So, skimming the fat off,  
 Say grace, with your hat off.  
 Oh, then with what rapture  
 Will it fill dean and chapter !”

The mention of Twickenham, where Swift was so keenly missed, reminds us of Pope's lines suggested by the vexed question of his descent. Swift in Ireland was contented to be called an Irishman; but the monument he put up to his grandfather in Goodrich (or Gotheridge) Church, to which he also presented a cup, implies, as Pope also took it, a desire to assert his English origin. He had sent a pencilled elevation of the tablet to Mrs Howard, who returned it with these lines on it scribbled by Pope. The paper was found endorsed in Swift's hand, “Model of a monument to my grandfather, with Mr Pope's roguery” :—

“Jonathan Swift  
 Had the gift  
 By fatheridge, motheridge,  
 And by brotheridge,  
 To come from Gotheridge,  
 But now is spoil'd clean  
 And an Irish dean.

In this church he has put  
 A stone of two foot;  
 With a cup and a can, sir,  
 In respect to his grandsire.  
 So Ireland change thy tone,  
 And cry O hone, O hone !  
 For England hath its own.”

Swift is rarely spoken of in these days but as a misanthrope, abhorring as well as despising his fellow-creatures. Misanthrope as he might be towards parties and people he did not like or did not know, he could not live without friends, who were more necessary to him than they are to many philanthropists, and more constantly in his mind for their amusement and his own; and trusting, no doubt, to their immense opinion of his genius, he delighted, among other uses of the “Little language,” in stringing together, in a sort of horse-play, jingling rhymes and interminable lines, in bold defiance of metrical rule, like the following,—certainly never designed for the public eye, though they found their way to it :—

“SWIFT'S AND HIS THREE FRIENDS'  
 INVITATION TO DR SHERIDAN.

“Dear Tom, this verse, which, however the beginning may appear, yet in the *end's good metre*,  
 Is sent to desire that, when your *august* vacation comes, your *friends* you'd *meet here*;  
 For why should stay you in that filthy hole—I mean the *city so smoky*—  
 When you have not one friend left in town, or at least no one that's *witty to joke wi' ye?*”

How he served his friends is shown, in one instance, by Gay's acknowledgments, who attributes to his good offices his appointment to attend Lord Clarendon to the House in capacity of secretary. “I am every day,” he writes, “attending my Lord Treasurer for his

\* *Vulgo* salary. † Supposed sorrel. ‡ Thyme or *time*.

§ Copper. The allusion is to Wood, the coiner of Irish halfpence, who furnished the text of the Drapier Letters.

|| “Which we suppose to be near four hours.”

bounty to help me out, which he hath promised me upon the following petition, which I have sent him by Dr Arbuthnot:—

“THE EPIGRAMMATICAL PETITION OF  
JOHN GAY.

“I’m no more to converse with the swains,  
But go where fine people resort.  
One can live without money on plains,  
But never without it at court.  
If, when with the swains I did gambol,  
I arrayed me in silver and blue,  
When abroad and in courts I shall ramble,  
Pray, my lord, how much money will do?”

Instead of the terrors of a competitive examination, his wardrobe was obviously Gay’s first care on entering the public service: for subdivision of labour is a modern idea. A genius or a clever fellow used to be considered fit, and to hold himself fit, at a moment’s warning, for any employment that would bring him an income. A place or an appointment, whatever the duties, was an appropriate recognition of any form of merit or success. Scarcely more than half a century ago, Theodore Hook was made accountant-general to the Mauritius, and treasurer to the colony, for rattling off such verses as these in ridicule of the tag-rag deputations to Queen Caroline:—

“A rout of sham sailors  
Escaped from their jailors,  
As sea-bred as tailors  
In Shropshire or Wilts,  
And Mark Oldi’s smile, and her’s,  
Greeting as Highlanders,  
Half a score Mile-enders  
Shivering in kilts.”

It was a fit sequel to such a choice that the luckless treasurer, having got the money affairs of the island into inextricable confusion, was brought back in disgrace, entertaining his custodians, and amusing the tedium of the voyage by extemporising songs, of which himself and his own predicament was the theme, and denouncing

“The atrocious, pernicious  
Scoundrel that emptied the till at Mauritius.”

But we are digressing, and must not leave the elder generation without one specimen, gathered from his letters, of Swift’s graver epistolary style, addressed to the honoured friend who was emphatically the poet of the brilliant circle. It is an example of his delightfully easy versification, so peculiarly adapted for familiar uses:—

“DR SWIFT TO MR POPE,

*While he was writing the ‘Dunciad.’*

“Pope has the talent well to speak,  
But not to reach the ear;  
His loudest voice is low and weak,  
The Dean too deaf to hear.

A while they on each other look,  
Then different studies chuse;  
The Dean sits plodding on a book—  
Pope walks and courts the muse.

Now backs of letters, though design’d  
For those who more will need ’em,  
Are filled with hints, and interlined,  
Himself can hardly read ’em.

Each atom by some other struck,  
All turns and motions tries;  
Till in a lump together stuck,  
Behold a poem rise!

Yet to the Dean his share allot;  
He claims it by a canon;  
*That without which a thing is not,  
Is causa sine quâ non.*

Thus, Pope, in vain you boast your wit;  
For, had our deaf divine  
Been for your conversation fit,  
You had not writ a line.

Of prelate thus for preaching fam’d  
The sexton reason’d well;  
And justly half the merit claim’d  
Because he rang the bell.”

Amongst epistolary effusions, Gray’s lines to Mason must find a place. Whether Mason had any idea of editing Shakespeare we cannot now remember, but doubtless Gray had been irritated by a good deal of the criticism laboriously bestowed on the poet by his numerous commentators, and thus expressed his opinion of their value:—



"TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

"July 16, 1765.

"WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE to MRS ANNE,  
*regular servant to the Rev. Mr Precentor  
of York.*

"A moment's patience, gentle Mistress  
Anne:

(But stint your clack for sweet St Charity):

'Tis Willey begs, once a right proper man,  
Though now a book, and interleav'd,  
you see.

Much have I borne from canker'd critic's  
spite,

From fumbling baronets, and poets  
small,

Pert barristers, and parsons nothing  
bright;

But what awaits me now is worst of all.

'Tis true our Master's temper natural  
Was fashion'd fair in meek, dove-like  
guise;

But may not honey's self be turned to  
gall

By residence, by marriage, and sore  
eyes?

If then he wreak on me his wicked will,  
Steal to his closet at the hour of prayer;  
And (then thou hear'st the organ piping  
shrill),

Grease his best pen, and all he scribbles  
tear.

Better to bottom tarts and cheesecakes  
nice,

Better the roast meat from the fire to  
save,

Better be twisted into caps for spice

Than thus be patched and cobbled in  
one's grave.

So York shall taste what Clouet never  
knew,

So from our works sublimer fumes shall  
rise;

While Nancy earns the praise to Shake-  
speare due,

For glorious puddings and immortal  
pies."

"Tell me, if you do not like this,"  
writes Gray, "and I will send you  
a worse." We think them good  
lines to find their home only in  
a letter; and Gray had no eye be-  
yond his correspondent: and so  
thought Mason, who writes answer,  
"As bad as your verses were, they  
are yours, and therefore, when I  
get back to York, I will paste them  
carefully in the first page of my  
Shakespeare, for I intend it to be

put in my marriage settlement, as a  
provision for my younger daughters."

Editors have been often provoca-  
tives of verse. Tom Moore has his  
thoughts on editors, though on dif-  
ferent grounds, but mingled in  
his case also with good cheer.  
The following querulous effusion  
fails to distinguish between the  
private, the social, and the pub-  
lic duties of the critic. "I see my  
Lord Edward," he writes, "an-  
nounced as one of the articles in the  
'Quarterly,' to be abused of course;  
and this so immediately after my  
dinings and junketings with both  
editor and publisher." Having  
occasion to write to Murray, he sent  
him the following squib:—

#### "THOUGHTS ON EDITORS.

*Editor et edit.*

"No, editors don't care a button  
What false and faithless things they do;  
They'll let you come and cut their mutton,  
And then they'll have a cut at you.

With Barnes I oft my dinner took,  
Nay, met ev'n Horace Twiss to please  
him;

Yet Mister Barnes traduced my book,  
For which may his own devils seize  
him!

With Doctor Bowring I drank tea,  
Nor of his cakes consumed a particle;  
And yet th' ungrateful LL.D.  
Let fly at me next week an article.

John Wilson gave me suppers hot,  
With bards of fame like Hogg and  
Packwood;

A dose of black strap then I got,  
And after a still worse of 'Blackwood!'

Alas! and must I close the list  
With thee, my Lockhart, of the 'Quar-  
terly!'

So kind, with bumper in thy fist—  
With pen, so *very* gruff and tarterly.

Now in thy parlour feasting me,  
Now scribbling at me from thy garret,  
Till 'twixt the two in doubt I be  
Which sourest is, thy wit or claret."

Byron never made verse his play-  
thing. Even where it affected to  
be, it was a weapon which would  
have altogether failed of its purpose  
if it did not find its way and hit far

beyond its seeming destination. Self-banished, he felt his exclusion from the intellects of the day, and sought for some medium of communication with them which should not compromise his pride. This medium was his distinguished publisher, at whose house his restless fancy imagined constant gatherings of wits and poets. To them he sent messages, as it were, to keep his name and fame still in men's mouths—and the fear of him, an abiding influence. Mr Murray was thus the depository of some lively *critiques* on men and books, as where Byron supplies him with a civil refusal of the 'Medical Tragedy' (Dr Polidori's), spoken in his (Murray's) own person. We give it as so far to our point that it is verse applied to a personal use, and affecting to be thrown off for the amusement of his correspondent :—

"There's Byron too, who once did better,  
Has sent me folded in a letter  
A sort of—it's no more a drama  
Than Darnley, Ivan, or Kehama ;  
So altered since last year his pen is,  
I think he's lost his wits at Venice.

But, to resume :  
As I was saying, sir, the room—  
The room's so full of wits and bards,  
Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres,  
and Wards,

And others, neither bards nor wits.  
My humble tenement admits  
All persons in the dress of gent,  
From Mr Hammond to Dog Dent ;  
A party dines with me to day,  
All clever men who make their way ;  
They're are at this moment in discussion

On poor De Stael's late dissolution ;  
Her book they say was in advance,  
Pray Heaven she tell the truth of  
France ;

Thus run our time and tongues away—  
But to return, sir, to your play," &c. &c.

His publisher's name suggests other verses in a more genuinely playful vein, as well as more for the individual recipient. He felt Murray the link between him and his country, as apart from a few personal in-

timacies. His mind, we see, ran on the scene where his name was spoken and his works inquired after. He liked to recall "the table's baize so green," the comings and goings, the literary gossip, and all that was most opposed to the line he had chosen for himself. It associated him with poets, not only of the day, but of the earlier times :—

"Strahan, Jonson, Lintot of the times,  
Patron and publisher of rhymes,  
To thee the bard up Pindus climbs,  
My Murray.

To thee with hope and terror dumb  
The unfledged MS. authors come ;  
Thou printest all—and sellest some—  
My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green  
The last new Quarterly is seen,  
But where is thy new Magazine  
My Murray ?

Along thy sprucest book-shelves shine  
The works thou deemest most divine—  
The 'Art of Cookery' and mine,  
My Murray.

Tours, travels, essays, too, I wist,  
And sermons to thy mill bring grist !  
And then thou hast thy 'Navy List,'  
My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude  
Without the Board of Longitude,  
Although this narrow paper would,  
My Murray."

Complimentary verses, if premeditated, scarcely come within our subject. Playful they may be, but no style of composition has more severely tasked the faculties of versifiers, or been less congenial to the poet proper. We mean, of course, social verse ; for addresses and dedications, profuse of compliment, swell the pages to a very inconvenient extent, of generations of poets. One exception, however, we must make to our exclusion of this vehicle for forced liveliness. What more easy and playful lines can we find than the following, or more suggestive of fun and enjoyment in the writer? and



if any question the choice of subject, let them remember the argument of the "Splendid Shilling"—

"Sing, heavenly Muse!  
Things unattempted yet in prose or  
rhyme,—  
A shilling, breeches, and chimeras dire."

"These lines were addressed to Mrs Legh on her wedding-day, in reference to a present of a pair of shooting-breeches she had made to Canning while he was a Christ Church undergraduate:—

"TO MRS LEGH.

"While all to this auspicious day,  
Well pleased, their heartfelt homage pay,  
And sweetly smile, and softly say  
A hundred civil speeches;  
My muse shall strike her tuneful strings,  
Nor scorn the gift her duty brings,  
Tho' humble be the theme she sings,—  
A pair of shooting-breeches.

Soon shall the tailor's subtle art  
Have made them tight, and spruce, and  
smart,

And fastened well in every part  
With twenty thousand stitches;  
Mark, then, the moral of my song;  
Oh, may your loves but prove as strong,  
And wear as well, and last as long,  
As these my shooting-breeches!

And when, to ease the load of life,  
Of private care, and public strife,  
My lot shall give to me a wife,  
I ask not rank or riches;  
For worth like thine alone I pray,  
Temper like thine, serene and gay,  
And formed, like thine, to *give away*,  
*Not wear herself*, the breeches."

No man that has much in him can write to amuse himself in ever so easy a vein, without telling something that will convey information a hundred years or so after. Take, for example, Cowper's song on the History of a Walk in the Mud. What a picture it raises of the roads and paths of his day! Often it occurs to the reader to speculate on the use that is made of gardens in literature of a former date. How constantly Pepys, *e. g.*, "walks up and down," in discussion! what provision was made for this exercise in all old gardens! A terrace, we

see, was no affair of mere state, it was a necessity of health; for if people walk for exercise in narrow bounds, it must be on a straight line, not one winding and turning. A country walk was an adventure for ladies in those days. Witness the immense preparations when the Duchess of Portland on first succeeding to Welbeck wished to walk to Creswell Crag, two miles and a half from the great house. The ladies were accompanied by the steward to show them the way, and two pioneers to level all before them. Paths were cut through thickets and brambles, and bridges made for swampy places. It was an expedition to be proud of. Walking was necessary to Cowper, and a lady companion equally necessary; hence the point he makes of having leave to walk in the Throckmortons' grounds. It is really sad to read (February 1785), "Of all the winters we have passed at Olney, this, the seventeenth, has confined us most. Thrice, and but thrice, since the middle of October, have we escaped into the fields for a little fresh air and a little change of motion. The last time it was at some peril we did it, Mrs Unwin having slipt into a ditch; and, though I performed the part of an active squire upon the occasion, escaped out of it upon her hands and knees." The occasion of the following composition was four years earlier, the Sister Anne addressed at the close being Lady Austen:—

"THE DISTRESSED TRAVELLERS, OR  
LABOUR IN VAIN.

*An excellent new song, to a tune never  
sung before.*

1.

"I sing of a journey to Clifton,  
We would have performed if we could,  
Without cart or barrow to lift on  
Poor Mary and me through the mud.  
Slee sla slud,  
Stuck in the mud;  
O it is pretty to wade through a flood!

2.

So away we went, slipping and sliding,  
Hop, hop, *à la mode de deux* frogs.

'Tis near as good walking as riding,  
When ladies are dress'd in their clogs.

Wheels, no doubt,  
Go briskly about,

But they clatter and rattle, and make  
such a rout !

3.

*She.*

Well ! now I protest it is charming ;

How finely the weather improves !

That cloud, though, is rather alarming ;

How slowly and stately it moves !

*He.*

Pshaw ! never mind ;

'Tis not in the wind ;

We are travelling south, and shall leave  
it behind.

4.

*She.*

I am glad we are come for an airing,

For folks may be pounded and penn'd

Until they grow rusty, not caring

To stir half a mile to an end.

*He.*

The longer we stay

The longer we may ;

It's a folly to think about weather or way.

5.

*She.*

But now I begin to be frighted

If I fall, what a way I should roll !

I am glad that the bridge was indicted,—

Stop ! stop ! I am sunk in a hole !

*He.*

Nay, never care !

'Tis a common affair ;

You'll not be the last that will set a foot  
there.

6.

*She.*

Let me breathe now a little, and ponder

On what it were better to do ;

That terrible lane I see yonder,

I think we shall never get through !

*He.*

So think I ;

But, by the by,

We never shall know if we never should  
try.

7.

*She.*

But, should we get there, how shall we  
get home ?

What a terrible deal of bad road we  
have passed !

Slipping and sliding ; and if we should  
come

To a difficult stile, I am ruin'd at last.

Oh, this lane ;

Now it is plain

That struggling and striving is labour in  
vain.

8.

*He.*

Stick fast there while I go and look.

*She.*

Don't go away, for fear I should fall !

*He.*

I have examined in every nook,

And what you have here is a sample  
of all.

Come, wheel round ;

The dirt we have found

Would be worth an estate, at a farthing  
a pound.

9.

Now, sister Anne, the guitar you must  
take ;

Set it, and sing it, and make it a song.

I have varied the verse for variety's sake,

And cut it off short, because it was long.

'Tis hobbling and lame,

Which critics won't blame,

For the sense and the sound, they say,  
should be the same."

Southey calls this one of the play-  
fullest and most characteristic of  
his pieces. We are glad to have a  
poet's testimony to its merits. It  
is a remarkable example of Cowper's  
special power of picturesquely re-  
producing a scene, incident, or situa-  
tion ; and by touches minutely true,  
playing with the trivialities of life  
as an exercise of his apt and choice  
resources of language. The editors  
have probably thought the subject  
too trivial, for it has been "over-  
looked" in every edition of his  
poems that we know of. There is  
a poem of Coleridge's which comes  
under our class, having been clearly  
written with friends only in view ;  
but as it is inserted in his works,  
we will only indicate it by a few  
lines. It is that Ode to the Rain,  
composed in bed on the morning  
appointed for the departure of a  
very worthy but not very pleasant  
visitor, whom it was feared the rain  
might detain :—

" But only now, for this one day,  
Do go, dear Rain, do go away !



O Rain ! with your dull twofold sound,  
The clash hard by, and the murmur all  
round !

You know, if you know aught, that we  
Both night and day but ill agree.  
For days, and months, and almost years  
Have limped on through this vale of  
tears,

Since body of mine and rainy weather  
Have lived on easy terms together.

Yet if, as soon as it is light,

O Rain ! you will but take your flight,  
Though you should come again to-morrow,  
And bring with you both pain and sorrow ;  
Though stomach should sicken and knees  
should swell,

I'll nothing speak of you but well.

But only now, for this one day,

Do go, dear Rain, do go away !"

Of all the intellectual gifts bestowed on man, the most intoxicating is readiness — the power of calling all the resources of the mind into simultaneous action at a moment's notice. Nothing strikes the unready as so miraculous as this promptitude in others ; nothing impresses him with so dull and envious a sense of contrast in his own person. To want readiness is to be laid on the shelf, to creep where others fly, to fall into permanent discouragement. To be ready is to have the mind's intellectual property put out at fifty or a hundred per cent ; to be unready at the moment of trial, is to be dimly conscious of faculties tied up somewhere in a napkin. What an engine—we are speaking of "the commerce of mankind"—is a memory ready with its stores at the first question, words that come at your call, thoughts that follow in unbroken sequence, reason quick at retort ! The thoughts we may feel not above our level ; the words we could arrange in as harmonious order ; the memory, only give it time, does not fail us ; the repartee is all the occasion called for, if only it had not suggested itself too late, thus changing its nature from a triumph into a regret. It is such comparisons, the painful recollection of panic and disaster,

the speech that would not be spoken, the reply that dissolved into incoherence, the action that belied our intention, or, it may be, experience in a humbler field, that gives to readiness such a charm and value. The ready man does seem such a very clever fellow. The poet's readiness does not avail him for such practical uses, and does not contribute to his fame or success at all in the same degree. It is the result — the thought, the wit, the sense — not the speed of performance, which determines the worth of his efforts. But we delight in an extempore effusion because of the prestige of readiness called into play in busy life ; at least this adds to the pleasure. The poet's best verses are the greatest, least imitable, wonder about him ; but we are apt to be most surprised when he shows his powers under immediate command : and good lines, struck off at a heat, do give us a vivid insight into the vivacity and energy of the poetical temperament, prompt in its action, ready at a call, and gaily willing to display its mechanical facilities. There is a specimen of Dryden's fluency in extempore verse, communicated and authenticated by Malone, which shows that foresight and composite action which a strong imagination seems to possess, uttering what it has prepared, and composing what is to follow, at one and the same time—a habit or faculty observed in Sir Walter Scott by his amanuenses. This double action must belong to all rapid complex expression ; but the difficulty is enhanced and the feat magnified in proportion when rhythm and rhyme are added to the other requirements.

"Conversation one day after dinner at Mrs Creed's running upon the origin of names, Mr Dryden bowed to the good old lady and spoke extempore the following verses :—

"So much religion in *your* name doth dwell,  
 Your soul must needs with piety excel ;  
 Thus names, like [well-wrought] pictures drawn of old,  
 Their owner's natures and their story told.  
 Your name but half expresses, for in you  
 Belief and justice do together go.  
 My prayers shall be, while this short life endures,  
 These may go hand in hand with you and yours ;  
 Till faith hereafter is in vision drown'd,  
 And practice is with endless glory crown'd."

Dr Johnson, readiness itself in his conversation, has left some remarkable examples of the extemporising power. Mrs Thrale relates that she went into his room at Streatham on her birthday and complained, "Nobody sends me verses now, because I am five-and-thirty years old ; and Stella was fed with them till forty-six, I remember."  
 "My having just recovered from illness will account for the manner in which he burst out suddenly ; for so he did without the least previous hesitation whatsoever, and without having entertained the smallest intention towards it half a minute before :—

"Oft in danger, yet alive,  
 We are come to thirty-five ;  
 Long may better years arrive,  
 Better years than thirty-five.  
 Could philosophers contrive,  
 Life to stop at thirty-five,  
 Time his hours should never drive  
 O'er the bounds of thirty-five.  
 High to soar, and deep to dive,  
 Nature gives at thirty-five.  
 Ladies, stock and tend your hive,  
 Trifle not at thirty-five ;  
 For howe'er we boast and thrive,  
 Life declines from thirty-five.  
 He that ever hopes to thrive  
 Must begin by thirty-five :  
 And all who wisely wish to wive,  
 Must look on Thrale at thirty-five."

"And now," said he, as I was writing them down, "you may see what it is to come for poetry to a dictionary-maker ; you may observe that the rhymes run in alphabetical order exactly,—and so they do."

His extempore parodies are by no means feats like this, which is really a bundle of valuable maxims ; but how easily flow the lines to Miss Reynolds, in 'imitation of the 'Penny Ballads,' and how well the rhythm is caught !—

"I therefore pray thee, Renny dear,  
 That thou wilt give to me,  
 With cream and sugar softened well,  
 Another dish of tea.

Nor fear that I, my gentle maid,  
 Shall long detain the cup,  
 When once unto the bottom I  
 Have drunk the liquor up.

Yet hear, alas ! this mournful truth,  
 Nor hear it with a frown,  
 Thou canst not make the tea so fast,  
 As I can drink it down."

Swift had an "odd humour" of extemporising rhymed proverbs, which he brought out with such apt readiness as to puzzle collectors of old saws. Thus, a friend showing off his garden to a party of visitors without inviting them to eat any of the fine fruit before them, Swift observed, "It was a saying of my dear grandmother's—

"Always pull a peach,  
 When it is within your reach,"

and helped himself accordingly, an example which, under such revered sanction, the rest of the party were not slow to follow.

The value of all specimens lies a good deal in the assurance of their authenticity as unprepared efforts, sudden plays of humour or ingenuity. The following professes also to be extempore ; but there must have been finishing touches,—it surely passes human power to have been hit off in one sustained unbroken flow. That it answers our leading requirement as poet's play work, there can be no doubt. Whitbread, it seems, had perpetrated the unpardonable sin against taste and parliamentary usage, of introducing personal and family matters into his speech on a great



public occasion, at a time when party feeling against Lord Melville was carried to a point of savage virulence. It is no wonder his witty friend was inspired by such an opportunity for firing a shot in return.

"FRAGMENT OF AN ORATION.

"Part of Mr Whitbread's speech on the trial of Lord Melville, 1805, put into verse by Mr Canning at the time it was delivered.

"I'm like Archimedes for science and skill ;  
I'm like a young prince going straight up  
a hill ;

I'm like (with respect to the fair be it  
said),

I'm like a young lady just bringing to bed.  
If you ask why the 11th of June I re-  
member

Much better than April, or May, or Nov-  
ember,

On that day, my Lords, with truth I as-  
sure ye,

My sainted progenitor set up his brewery ;  
On that day in the morn he began brew-  
ing beer ;

On that day too commenced his connubial  
career ;

On that day he received and he issued his  
bills ;

On that day he cleared out all his cash  
in his tills ;

On that day he died, having finished his  
summing,

And the angels all cried, 'There's old  
Whitbread a-coming !'

So that day I still hail with a smile and  
a sigh,

For his beer with an E, and his bier with  
an I ;

And still on that day in the hottest of  
weather,

The whole Whitbread family dine alto-  
gether.

So long as the beams of this house shall  
support

The roof which o'ershades this respect-  
able court,

Where Hastings was tried for oppressing  
the Hindoos ;

So long as that sun shall shine in at those  
windows,

My name shall shine bright as my ancest-  
or's shines ;

Mine recorded in journals, his blazoned  
on signs."

Our examples have been uniform-  
ly taken from biographers' collections

of letters and private recollections. In only one case have we referred to the poet's "poems" for the specimens in point ; though our extract may, in one or two instances, have been removed from its original standing to a niche in what are emphatically called an author's works.

It is obvious, on this and other grounds, that our poets at play can include no living brother within their circle. Poets must first be known and valued by their works. They must have done great things before we care for trifles from their hands. But this knowledge once acquired, and an estimate formed, a further intimacy may be promoted by some acquaintance with performances which do not rank among their works. It would be very unjust to measure them by such specimens as we have strung together ; but having established their reputation with us, trivialities, like many of these, if they do not contribute to their fame, yet suggest versatility, and in most cases add an engaging touch of homely nature to a great name. They are all examples, as we began by saying, of that essential element of the poet's nature when in working effective order—exceptional life and spirits. Nobody writes verse for his own pleasure, or even relief, without the barometer of his spirits being on the rise. They are tokens of that abiding youthfulness which never leaves him while he can write a living line. The poet, we need not say, is for ever sighing over the youth that is past and gone, not taking note of the youth that remains to him, altogether independent of years. But, in fact, he is a boy all his life, capable of finding amusement in matters which the plodding man of the world considers puerile, and so conferring on his readers and lovers some share of his own spring, some taste of the freshness which helps to keep the world alive.

## THE ROMANCE OF THE JAPANESE REVOLUTION.

VISITORS to the Vienna Exhibition were grievously disappointed at one part of the promised show. They had been told that all the nations and peoples of the remote orient would come crowding in the wake of their miscellaneous exhibits to the palace of industry on the semi-oriental Danube. They came in faith and hope, to see few signs of anything of the kind. There were no flowing draperies in silk or flowered calico, no jewelled turbans or high-crowned caps of fur. If there were any Pagan visitors from the Tartar steppes, they were so completely disguised *en Chrétien* that there was no detecting them. If there were gentlemen from the Caucasus or the Persian frontier, they had dismantled themselves of their ambulant armories, and left their cartridge-quilted vests at home. The Anglicised Hindoo was conspicuous by his absence. We believe there was but a single Chinaman, and he was on duty in the department of the Flowery Land; nay, even the Osmanli from the neighbouring Bosphorus had not been stirred sufficiently from his habitual apathy to trouble himself to undertake the easy voyage by rail and steamboat. *En revanche*, there was one strange type of nationality you met at every turn—small, slight-made men, with olive complexions and black twinkling eyes slit almond-fashion. But on their way to Vienna they had probably passed by Paris, and were dressed in such garments as are to be procured at the Belle Jardinière or the Bon Diable, with tall chimney-pot hats that came well down upon their foreheads. They had taken wonderfully kindly to these new clothes of theirs, and yet there was

something about them that told you they were masquerading cleverly. On the first glance you were conscious of an impression you had seen them somewhere before, and then it gradually dawned on you that it was on porcelain vases and lacquered cabinets you had met them. For these were the Japanese, the sprightly children of "the Land of the Rising Sun;" and it was not only in the ease with which they had slipped into their European clothes that they showed their happy faculties of adaptation. They were little versed as yet in foreign tongues; they knew next to nothing of German gutturals. But there they were, working their way about everywhere, giving the freest play to their inquiring minds, and dispensing for the most part with interpreter or cicerone. They hopped on behind the crowded tramway cars with an utter absence of the dignity we regard as the birthright of oriental blood; they submitted to be jostled and trodden upon with as little sign of temper or prejudice as the good-humoured Viennese themselves; they bartered their base Austrian coin for conductors' tickets as if they had been accustomed to street railways from their boyhood. You saw them everywhere, because they had been sent so far upon their travels at the Government expense, to act on the maxim of the sage Bacon. Travel with them was indeed a part of education, and they were studying men as much as things. The shrewd interest shown in their sharp eyes seemed never to flag for a moment; the flesh might sometimes be weary, but the spirit was always willing. If they had shipped any prejudices with them in Japan, they



had thrown them overboard on the outward voyage. High-caste Hindoos, even if they had consented to come across the "black water," would have thought themselves contaminated had they been brought in contact with unbelievers at their meals. The Chinaman would have showed himself all abroad had he not been permitted to bring his chopsticks into society. But these Japanese gentlemen frequented the French restaurants, and gulped down Dreher's beer in the Austrian "breweries" like all the rest of the world; they handled our knives and forks as if they had been to the fashion born, and, in short, behaved themselves in every respect like easy and liberal men of the world.

To those who remarked the ease and *aplomb* of their bearing, it seemed scarcely credible that they came from a country that had maintained itself in the most churlish isolation until within the last twenty years: a country so jealously self-contained that until the other day permission to leave it would have been denied to its highest dignitaries. We know how an Englishman looks when he sets his foot for the first time in a strange city—half shy, half suspicious, moving about in a chilling atmosphere of repulsion which numbs his good-fellowship and faculties, and obscures his vision. Frenchmen may be more versatile and impressionable, yet fugitive impressions disappear from their casing of vain self-complacency, like breath from a plating of polished steel. These Japanese rubbed their eyes when they woke up in a new world of wonders, and there they were, wide awake at once. Their lively brains must have been in a perpetual whirl of excitement, but surprises stimulated instead of stunning them. They came to Europe eager to learn, and from the first day of their landing they

began to do like the Europeans. The imitation of externals came naturally to them: they were quick at catching up the manners and customs of the people who jostled them. They acted like a shrewd man who finds himself in more refined society than he has been used to, and is not sure of the ways of his company. They observed and copied with smiling self-confidence and an off-hand assumption of original action. They were learning from everything around them without an appearance of effort; and under their *insouciant* exterior, they were remodelling their minds with marvellous rapidity. Whether minds so mobile, and made of material so plastic, are the best materials for forming a great nation and founding a stable power, is another question. It is at least certain that these Japanese were the genuine representatives of that spirit of progress or innovation which is hurrying the ancient empire of the Mikados towards a future that no one can foretell.

Had the Japanese been a nation of quick and docile barbarians, we could better understand all that has passed among them of late years. But until Americans and Europeans bombarded them into the brotherhood of nations, they had been conservative to bigotry, and with no little reason. The past they are now impatient to break with was one of which any untravelled people might well be proud; and it was odd enough that, at the moment when they were flocking to Vienna, they were playing a game of cross purposes with the most advanced nations of the Western world. While they were doing their best to denationalise themselves with astounding success, we Europeans were servilely copying their arts, and humbly confessing that our attempts at imitation were failures. Wherever

you moved about among the ornamental works of the Exhibition—especially among the ceramics, the wood-carving, and the precious metals—you saw Japanese ideas in the ascendant. If there were extraordinary grace in an outline, or wonderful delicacy in a fabric, you might be pretty sure it was borrowed from the Japanese. Although there are follies in fashions, and our connoisseurs have launched into many an absurd extravagance since Dutch monsters fetched fabulous prices, in the early days of the Hanoverian dynasty, there could be no mistake about the æsthetic purity of this fashion. In the court of the Japanese you could judge for yourself of the admirable superiority of their models. You crossed the threshold to find yourself in an artistic fairyland, where fancy might be said to have run the wildest riot, had it not been subordinated so invariably to the sense of the beautiful. There was much that was grotesque, for rich drollery and quaint humour abounded. There was a great deal of ingeniously imagined deformity: but in the grotesqueness there was never anything to scandalise, and often the deformity had its positive fascination. Everywhere the perfect elaboration of the patient execution did ample justice to the vigorous originality of the design. The monsters, marine and terrestrial, exquisitely moulded in brass or bronze, were instinct with life; while, fabulous or not, they impressed you with a conviction of the general correctness of their anatomy. The snakes and lizards coiling themselves on the covers of vases, or twining themselves into handles or hinges, looked like nature itself in all their fantastic contortions. There was a world of expression in the eyes of the elephants and the sagacious curl of the ani-

mals' trunks. As for the fabrics of the famous pottery-ware, the colouring of the painted flowers and the tints of the plumage of the birds, they were the envy and despair of Staffordshire potteries and Parisian artists. With all their taste, appliances, and experience, neither Deck in France nor Mr Binns in England could surpass, or even equal, the delicate ivory of the Sutsumaware, with its waving lines, or the red and grey of the exquisite Kago. No European fingers had the nicety to manipulate those minute *plaques* of gold that were wrought into those wondrous designs on the exquisitely-finished cabinets; while the *repoussée*-work on vases, caskets, and incense-burners was imitable in its delicacy. Painting, no doubt, was in its infancy with them. They had crude notions of perspective; they had not gone on educating themselves through successive centuries to develop schools and styles; nor did they show any of the highly-varnished canvasses we hang on the walls of academies and *salons*. With them the painter was rather in the pay of the upholsterer and house-decorator. They dashed in a pattern in outline on screens and hangings, with men and heads, birds and fishes, fruits and flowers. But in the measure and within the scope of their designs, they showed something more like genius than talent. There were flights of water-fowl streaming through the air, there were fishes cleaving the water. There was but a line, a dot, or a shadow here and there to convey the idea of water or the atmosphere. It eluded your critical sagacity altogether to discover how the artist had conveyed so easily the idea of motion, lightness, and buoyancy; but there could be no mistake about the vivid reality of your impressions. And yet the collection that excited the



admiration of connoisseurs only indicated faintly the extent and value of the art-treasures of the Japanese empire; for the rage for Japanese art has prevailed among us for a good many years, and dealers and brokers have picked up most that was for sale, and transferred it before now to wealthy amateurs. It is true that the Government, when it decided on exhibiting, advertised for industrial objects, to be produced regardless of cost. But the Mikado and the great nobles were not likely to strip their palaces and risk their most treasured objects on a perilous sea-voyage, even in order that they might raise the reputation of their country in the opinion of remote barbarians. Such as the exhibition was, however, it showed you sufficient to indicate the existence of an old civilisation of a very high character; for when a country has made such advances in the arts, it implies a strong social organisation, refined tastes, and the leisure and security to indulge them. Anarchy and irresponsible despotism arbitrarily exercised, are altogether incompatible with the calm thought and patient labour that for many centuries had been working those precious materials into those costly heirlooms. There had been wars and troubles in Japan, no doubt,—indeed the Japanese have been a military nation *par excellence*; and the sword was the most honoured of all the professions, for the military caste took rank after the nobles. But the manner of conducting wars and feuds may be a proof the more of the progress and spirit of a nation; and these ancient vases and cabinets must either have been saved by sound engineering from siege and storm, or been spared by the victors in a spirit of appreciation, or else by capitulations honourably observed.

The Japanese have notoriously

been a nation of warriors, and that in all probability was the reason why the exhibition was so surprisingly pacific in its character. They have just been fighting out their revolution in a sharp series of civil wars; throwing aside the weapons that served their fathers and used to satisfy themselves, and snatching eagerly at those that were offered them by European traders. Of late years it was European war-steamers and field-pieces, Sniders, Enfields, powder and cartridges, that figured most conspicuously among the imports at the treaty ports; but as yet they had scarcely found time to establish gun-factories for themselves, and so they had nothing to exhibit among native productions by way of competing with Essen or Woolwich. Yet one warlike object they did exhibit, and a very significant one, for it was eloquent of the marvellous transitions they are passing through, as well as of the extraordinary dangers which beset the foreigners who have settled among them. The chain-armour of a Japanese foot-soldier, with the plumed morion to match, had slipped in somehow among the china and the cabinets. It embodied in itself many of the odd contrasts and inconsistencies which still strike the stranger in Japan, although they are fast disappearing before revolutionary legislation: it reminded you of the recent vitality of that formidable, aggressive, and reactionary feudal system which consented of a sudden to its own happy despatch in the very flush of a crowning victory. It expressed the intense antagonism of the immemorial institutions of Japan to that trading spirit which has carried all before it, imbuing to all appearance in a few short years the natural leaders of the feudal aristocracy of the empire. It was eloquent of the romantic side of the

Japanese life and manners, which in their very picturesqueness were a standing menace to strangers. It recalled the times—they are only of yesterday—when the streets, highroads, and houses of entertainment swarmed with the swordsmen retainers of the daimios; when these men, who, by training and tradition, were utterly reckless of life and consequences, regarded every foreigner they set eyes upon as the symbol of all that was most vile and objectionable; when the country was infested by bands of masterless men-at-arms, something of a cross between the knight-errant and the *condottiero*. Chain-armor of this kind was going out of fashion with us when the Black Prince and his father won Crecy and Poitiers; morions of the sort have been out of date since the wars of the Long Parliament; but they were the uniform worn by the soldiers of Chosiu and Satsuma when they were settling their domestic differences the other day, within range or hearing of the rifled guns in our ironclads. The armour of yesterday is relegated to-day to museums, with all the antiquated institutions it symbolised; but the men who wore it can scarcely have changed their natures, or renounced the feelings inculcated as the religion of their caste.

Japan has always been enveloped in mystery, thanks to its jealous policy of exclusion; and now that its ports are thrown open to us, it is more of a mystery than ever. The story of our intercourse with it during the last quarter of a century has resembled in all respects a historical romance. It has abounded in sensations and startling surprises. It has been a succession of plots cleverly contrived to puzzle us, and of which we scarcely yet hold the clue. The grand *dénouement* is to come, and the best-informed obser-

vers are watching for it in hopeless mystification. As for exciting episodes, they are endless. Peaceful diplomatists have been sitting and negotiating under keen-edged swords that have been literally suspended by threads. Merchants have been pushing their trade in the teeth of prejudices, and in defiance of threats,—buying and selling on the treacherous edge of an abyss. Now the country is apparently inundated with European ideas, and the loyal subjects of the galvanised Mikado are supposed to have renounced their most cherished prejudices, and to have taken for their models foreigners and traders—the people they detested, following a calling they despised. But to measure the movement, and to estimate the dangers our countrymen have so far tided over in comparative safety, we must glance at what we know of the condition of the empire before the recent revolution and fall of the Shogun.

There are a good many excellent works on the subject—excellent, at least, according to their authors' light at the time of writing; for we have gradually been fathoming the depths of our ignorance. But of the works that have been written, there is none, perhaps, that gives a more thorough insight into Japanese society than one of the lightest and least pretending—Mitford's 'Tales of Old Japan.' One veracious native history like that of the "Forty-seven Ronins" is worth any quantity of speculative commentary on passing events, hit off superficially from the European point of view. The features in the national character and institutions, brought out by Mitford in the boldest relief, are precisely those that would make the events that have been happening lately under our eyes appear most improbable. We see a martial spirit in the ascendant every-



where : the soldier class ranking after the nobles ; the agriculturist taking precedence over the ingenious artisan ; and the trading counterpart of the foreign settlers occupying the lowest place of all. We see the central Government, with which foreigners would naturally treat, divided against itself ; while powerful feudatories, paying but an illusory allegiance to their liege lord, overshadowed the throne altogether, and carried the system of decentralisation to an extreme. We see the patriarchal principle almost more absolute than it ever was among ourselves in the Highlands of Scotland ; the system of clanship in the fullest force, with a self-sacrificing devotion on the part of the clansmen so sublime as sometimes to border on the ludicrous. The point of a tragic story often lies in the grim humour with which a vassal gravely insists on despatching himself for a mere bagatelle—for nowhere perhaps do men part more lightly with their lives than in Japan. Not only do the Japanese possess the passive indifference to death of the Chinaman, who will make a bargain for his life as for anything else that belongs to him ; but they have the active and high-flown courage which inspired the fantastic chivalry of our middle ages. Setting their personal feelings out of the question altogether, the very idea that the foreigners were objects of detestation to their lords, with the knowledge that their being under the protection of the Government made it a somewhat dangerous matter to meddle with them, was quite sufficient to provoke the swaggering Samurai to undertake the adventure of cutting down individuals. No doubt assassination and attempts at assassination occurred not unfrequently. The only marvel is, that massacres have not been universal, and that

either the legations or the mercantile communities have survived so far to see their perseverance rewarded.

Take the tale of the "Forty-seven Ronins" by way of illustrating our argument. The Ronins, who figure so conspicuously in Japanese legends, are, to borrow the old Scotch phrase, "broken men"—literally "wave men"—who, by some crime or accident, are masterless for the time being, and who have taken to living by sword and stirrup, in defiance of the law and at war with society. The famous Forty-seven were part of the following of a high dignitary of the Shogunate. Being thrown on the world by his untimely and violent death, they banded themselves together in secret to avenge him. Their unfortunate master had been condemned to the *hara-kiri*—solemn suicide, with all the forms of state ceremony—for attempting to right a wrong of his own within the sacred precincts of the Shogun's palace. They vowed to carry out the work that their master had been interrupted in ; but his enemy and theirs was wary and vigilant, and formidably guarded in his fortified residence. In their loyalty they deliberately decided to sacrifice their own careers, their lives, their character, their happiness, and their tenderest affections. To disarm suspicion, their leader betakes himself to a life of low debauchery, haunts houses of ill-fame, and rolls about the public ways in a state of swinish intoxication. Nay, more, he quarrels with his dearly-loved wife when she remonstrates ; and to make sure that his part shall be played out to perfection, he does not take her into his confidence. On the contrary, he divorces her with abusive words, sending her away sorrowing, to the scandal of their grown-up family. So much for the preparation ; and the circumstances of the night attack, when it

comes off at last, are scarcely less significant of the national manners. The palace to be assailed is in the crowded metropolis of Yeddo; and the Forty-seven send round the quarter to warn its inhabitants not to be alarmed should they hear a disturbance. The formal announcement runs thus: "We, the Ronins, who were formerly in the service of Asano Takumi no Kami, are this night about to break into the palace of Kôtsuké no Suké, to avenge our lord. As we are neither night robbers nor ruffians, no hurt will be done to the neighbouring houses. We pray you to set your minds at rest." Accordingly, not a soul stirs, although the desperate fight is maintained for hours. For the body-guards of Kôtsuké no Suké show themselves just as stanch as the Ronins, and, taken by surprise as they were, they fight it out till they fall to a man. The palace is carried, and its occupant ferreted out, hiding himself in rather ludicrous circumstances. Yet the chief of the Ronins, warm from the fray, in spite of his inveterate animosity and the contemptible appearance presented by his trembling victim, makes it a point of honour to resume the calm dignity of a warrior's training. He is exceptionally punctilious in observing the forms of humble respect due to a superior. He briefly recalls the circumstances that have brought about the present catastrophe, apologising with much courtesy for the disagreeable necessity to which he and his companions have been driven, and respectfully prays the wounded nobleman to execute the "happy despatch," volunteering himself for "the honour" of acting as second. Kôtsuké, however, won't hear of this. He is one of those rare characters in Japanese legend or history—a coward who even shrinks from death when it is inevitable. So he figures passively

in place of actively, as principal in the drama that is hastily enacted, and the Ronins evacuate his palace, carrying off his head. It is their intention to offer it on their master's tomb. Although the city is all in excitement by this time, no one attempts to obstruct their retreat. It is understood that the head of their late master's family has got his retainers all under arms, ready to come to their support if necessary. He will protect them from the populace, or the followers of other princes; he even offers them a banquet of honour; yet he will not interpose between them and the law. Their lives were devoted beforehand, and they had counted the cost when they swore themselves to the desperate adventure. They feast themselves solemnly with "gruel" and wine before completing their pious work, by offering the head of his enemy to the manes of their master. Then they calmly await their fate in the sanctuary where they had taken refuge, although the country is before them, and they can fly if they please. The sentence comes at last in an order that the whole forty-seven shall perform hara-kiri. They have knowingly broken the law, and there is no remitting the penalty. But, although divided in their deaths, they are once more reassembled in an honoured sepulchre, around the master they loved so well; and from that day until now their memory has been revered, and they have been worshipped.

Now this is no picturesque legend of another and earlier state of society, like an exploit of Robin Hood or Rob Roy, or even of some highwayman on Bagshot Heath. Until the other year, if not to the present day, the unflinching loyalty of the warlike Samurais to their feudal lords was similar in kind, if not in intensity, to that which



has immortalised the Forty-seven Ronins. Suicides on the point of honour were just as common lately as then, and were often committed with far less reason. Thus Mr Mitford tells us how, so late as 1868, a man had solemnly disembowelled himself among the graves of the Ronins, simply because he had been refused admission among the followers of the Prince of Chosiu; and no one seemed to think the proceeding anything but natural. An individual act may be prompted by fanaticism or insanity; but there is no misinterpreting the annals of the recent wars. One of the most striking instances we can recall is furnished by the repeated revolts of that Prince of Chosiu, the warlike and turbulent daimio of Naguto. Chosiu took the field in 1864 with fifty thousand men; and of course, in any ordinary war, the men he nourished would naturally follow him. But he flew at high game, and actually assaulted the palace of the Mikado. Now the explanation of the late revolution offered by Iwakaura, the present premier, and other leading politicians, is, that it has its springs in the profound reverence of the nation for the person and office of the Mikado—a reverence which survived the usurpation of his authority by the Shoguns during a period of seven hundred years. Yet Chosiu's troops stood by him in his deed of sacrilege, and they fought gallantly, though the assault failed. The Shogun and the daimios in alliance with him turned out, and came to the rescue. Chosiu had to succumb to the forces of the League; he and his son shaved their heads and retired from public life to sanctuary in a temple, just as the beaten monarchs of early Christian monarchies were sometimes permitted to withdraw into convents. His contrition and submission were both feigned; but, to give a lively

colour to them, and to carry off his part successfully, he informed his great officers who had headed his troops that it was his pleasure they should perform hara-kiri. Then he duly transmitted the heads of these stanch friends of his to the Shogun by way of vouchers. A more cruel, cowardly, and treacherous proceeding—one better fitted to alienate the affections of the most loyal subjects—it is difficult to conceive. Yet in the following year, when he was again in the field, his men followed him as loyally as ever, although the military odds were all against him, and although, in the disturbed state of the country, they could have deserted him with absolute impunity.

But in truth, not only was there blind devotion among the men-at-arms to their immediate chiefs, but a most deferential submission among all classes to those above them. First came the nobles, then the soldiers, then the agriculturists, artisans, traders. The men who tilled the ground held high honour comparatively in the social hierarchy; but they submitted in resigned acquiescence to the imposts of their landlords, until sometimes when their burdens became at last absolutely intolerable. To venture on remonstrance or appeal needed heroism almost as self-sacrificing as that which animated the Ronins; and next to the tale of the Forty-seven, the story in Mitford which is most characteristic is that of the ghost of Sakurá. Sôgorô is head-man of a village in a district which is being ground to the dust by exactions. The miserable inhabitants take heart of grace and petition their lord, who is an absentee proprietor residing in Yeddo. They take nothing by their petition but a warning not to do it again. Driven to desperation, Sôgorô, knowing full well what he has to expect in any case, resolves on appeal to the Shogun, stops him

as Richie Moniplies stopped King James, and thrusts a petition into his litter. The "siffication" is favourably received, the truth of its contents being admitted on inquiry—things must have come to a melancholy pass with the villagers before such an act of insubordination was approved—and the lord is commanded to do justice. He dare not disobey the Shogun, but Sôgorô is his, to deal with as he pleases; nor does the Shogun, in the full plenitude of his power, feel it his province to interpose for the unlucky villager's protection. Sôgorô is condemned to crucifixion, with his wife and family. The population of the district he has saved are full of sympathy, although not greatly surprised. Sôgorô is a lost man, they see; indeed, his life is forfeited by custom, if not by law. But they make an effort to save his wife and children, and nothing can be more thoroughly Japanese than the quaint wording of their petition. "With deep fear we humbly venture"—"With reverence and joy we gratefully acknowledge the favour," squeezed out of this vindictive lord—"With fear and trembling we recognise the justice of Sôgorô's sentence." Sôgorô has been "guilty of a heinous crime." "In his case we reverently admit there can be no reprove."

In fact, when we established relations with Japan, it was a federation of feudal despotisms, administered more or less benevolently according to the individual dispositions of the daimios, and all nominally subjected to the Shogun, who was despotic within his own territories, and so far as his power extended beyond them. The great daimios resided for a good part of the year in Yeddo, the Shogun's capital, in vast palaces that covered whole quarters. The barracks of potentates like Satsuma or Chosiu

had accommodation for 10,000 or 15,000 men, and were often overflowing. And these formidable bodyguards were not regularly drilled and disciplined troops. They were reckless swashbucklers, idle and penniless, for their bread literally depended on their masters, and they subsisted on the daily rations of rice by which their masters measured their incomes. We have seen how lightly life is held by all classes; and these men were trained from their boyhood to show contempt for death. Not a man of the gentlemen among them but had been regularly instructed in the ceremonial of the *hara-kiri*, with the view of dying with dignity and credit should he ever be condemned to solemn suicide. The Japanese youths were taught to die as boys with us are taught to dance. Not a man among them but would have thought himself honoured at being singled out to commit an assassination on his prince's behalf, and who would not have felt his mission the more flattering had he been commanded to make himself a scapegoat, and keep his prince's counsel. They were far quicker to take murderous hints than the duller brains of the Barons to whom Henry spoke so plainly, when he longed to be rid of the overbearing Beckett. Without hints of any sort they understood the spirit of their masters' minds, and knew they could rely upon the protection of their clansmen should they come home red-handed after cutting down a foreigner. Even when they went abroad with no particular design—when they were swaggering about in the tea-houses with those naked blades of theirs, the keener of which are warranted to cut through three corpses at a blow—the temptation to have a slash at a passing foreigner must often have been almost irresistible. As we remarked



before, the wonder is, not that foreigners were occasionally slaughtered, but that a single individual of them was suffered to exist. When a crime was committed, and the Shogun declared, in answer to remonstrances, that his justice was baffled, it is more than likely that he generally spoke the truth. It might have puzzled a daimio to detect a culprit among the crowd of his followers, although, no doubt, had he declared that a scapegoat was wanted, there would have been keen competition for the honourable service.

Such were the daimios and their retainers when the American and European war squadrons were prevailing on the Shogun to give us access to the country. So long as the daimios were courteous to the Shogun, and spoke reverentially of the Mikado, they had pretty much *carte blanche* to do as they pleased even in Yeddo. In their own dominions they were absolute. They were very bigoted; the chief of them were very rich; they had good reason to be satisfied with the island-empire they had locked themselves up in; they dreaded change; they detested foreigners, and especially despised them in their capacity of traders, the capacity in which the strangers claimed admission to Japan. They had formed their idea of Europeans, Christians, and traders, from the Dutch they penned up in Nagasaki harbour,—for their intercourse with the Portuguese was an old story. The abject submission of these Dutch strangers must have confirmed the Japanese in their contempt for the trading classes. For the sake of profit, the Dutch had consented to all manner of inflictions and restrictions; and it had been the consistent policy of the authorities to degrade them in the eyes of the people. They were shut up in an artificial island; they had to send a solemn deputation annu-

ally to play the mountebanks in the presence of the Mikado by way of court ceremony; they were said to have renounced their religion by trampling on the symbol of their salvation, although that may have been calumny. So when Commodore Perry sailed his squadron into Yeddo Bay in the summer of 1853, the Japanese no doubt believed that he brought a fresh batch of humble petitioners for toleration. They were quickly undeceived, and the American took a bold line from the first. He spoke as equal to equal, with an insinuation of unknown resources in reserve that was calculated to impress an intelligent people. On shore he could have done nothing, and the followers of a daimio of the third class might have disposed of the party of marines he might have landed. But then, on the other hand, he was invulnerable at sea. There his squadrons were floating in the hitherto inviolate waters of the Empire, flaunting their dragon pendants with the stripes and stars, and resolutely declining to be put off with speeches, either soft or imperious. He was mistaken, like the rest of the world, as to who was the legal sovereign; but he was aware that the Shogun was actual ruler, and he declined to enter into negotiations with anybody but officials of the highest rank. There he was, and there he seemed likely to stay. For the Japanese had no navy in their archipelago, although the light coasting vessels that scouted about their enemy's ships were models of grace and skilful construction in their way.

We have no intention of even sketching in outline the history of negotiations since the Americans first broke ground in their straightforward fashion. We will only repeat that they went the right way to work with their practical sagacity; and very soon—such was the

force of their example—the Dutch actually got up from their knees, and provoked a snub by their sudden change of demeanour. In the earliest days of foreign interposition, we think we can comprehend the progress of thought and the shifting relations of parties in the empire. The Mikado had nothing to say in the matter, and probably neither he nor his Court nobles felt any great interest in it. The Shoguns had administered the realm for centuries, and it was the province of the Shoguns to deal with those importunate barbarians. The daimios were disgusted with the overweening pretensions of the new arrivals; they detested them heartily, with the strange forms of civilisation they had imported, and they resented the Shogun not having got rid of them at once. As for the Shogun, he was very sensible of the increasing pressure he was being subjected to. Sharp and intelligent like all his countrymen, he made it his business to find out what forces those intrusive foreigners could dispose of, and to discover whether they were in a position to make good their promises. For while they hinted that he must be coerced in case of recalcitrancy, they were very eloquent as to all he would gain were he only to give in to them with a good grace. At first, unquestionably, it was his purpose to get credit with his countrymen by throwing dust in the strangers' eyes, for his position was excessively delicate and dangerous, as events have proved. As the strangers would not be blinded, he had to choose the lesser of two evils: he went in for the speculative alternative of obtaining for himself and his country great gains by means of trade, at the risk of provoking unpopularity and strong animosities. We talk of the Shogun, for such seems to have been the suc-

cessive policy of the men who filled the office while foreigners had anything to do with them. But in those few years the Shoguns changed fast. An acting regent was assassinated in broad day close to the very gates of his palace; while one, if not two others, died under strong suspicion of poison. But in reality it was the last of the Shoguns—the instigator of that audacious assassination of the regent—who voluntarily embodied in his conduct the policy that had been forced on his predecessors by the very decided line he adopted. He hurried matters to the crisis that crushed the Shogunate.

Yoshi Hisha, a prince of the family of Mito, began to be so firmly persuaded of the profits of this foreign connection, that he fell under the suspicion of desiring to monopolise them for his own advantage. Seventeen years had elapsed since Commodore Perry's arrival in Japanese waters, and the daimios all the time had been in process of conversion to European ideas. Satsuma had been bombarded in his capital of Kagosima. A descent had been made on Chosiu's territories, in retaliation for his firing upon passing shipping; his batteries had been spiked in the straits of Nagasaki, and the obstructions cleared away that he had laid down in their intricate channel. The daimios had learned the value of European weapons, and the comparative worthlessness of their own. They had begun to buy armour-plated steamers and rifled guns; but each was nervously apprehensive that his neighbour might get the start of him. What chance had a body of irregular swordsmen clothed in chain-armour, with regularly-drilled battalions armed with breech-loaders? And there was the Shogun at headquarters treating directly with the foreigners; increasing a strength they



were already jealous of, and which had no superstitious sanction, like that of the Mikados. He made concession of treaty ports after a great show of resistance, and all of them were in territories that were under his personal control. The eighteen great feudatories could only conduct their transactions with the strangers through the intermediacy of the Shogun's officers; the Prince of Satsuma being perhaps an exception, for he always kept himself on a somewhat exceptional footing. At first these feudatories had been as bitterly opposed to new-fangled innovations as our English squires when their properties were threatened by the railway companies. Now, like the Englishmen, when they saw that money was being lavished all around them, they recognised their mistake, and tried to retrieve it. They were eager for opening treaty ports of their own; and the Shogun, who saw that discontent was rife, and war imminent in any case, was more resolved than ever not to concede these. Were the war to break out, arms might counterbalance numbers, and he had no idea of renouncing what advantage he possessed in the way of obtaining superior equipments. Already it appeared that the warlike prince of Nagato had managed to get the start of him in that respect, probably in great measure by way of contraband trade, if trade may be called contraband when the rebellious potentate was strong enough and bold enough to carry it on in defiance of his superior.

While the Shogunate was being threatened by this formidable coalition, it occurred to both parties to turn to the Mikado. In the seven hundred years of the Shogunate it had been the interest and policy of the reigning Shogun to ignore the *empereur fainéant* of Kioto; and this policy of neglect had succeeded

so well that the daimios had come to regard the Mikado as a phantom. When Lord Elgin and Baron Gros had treated with the Shogun as supreme sovereign, that usurping dignitary had left them in their mistake; and when the treaties were solemnly signed and sealed, no one else had cared to undeceive them. Indeed, what had once been usurpation had since been sanctioned by time and custom; and if prescription and acquiescence go for anything in a matter of the kind, the Shogun was sovereign by acquiescence of the Mikado. If might as well as right had remained with the Shoguns, we should have heard nothing of reviving the temporal supremacy of the Mikados. But the intercourse with the foreigners had shaken the political and social relations of the country to their foundation. The influence of the Shogun had depended not so much on his personal territorial power as on a solidarity of interest with the most powerful daimios; for the Shogunate was not hereditary in a single family, but elective among four of the leading houses. Now the daimios being divided against themselves, the Shogun who was their chief began to totter. The hostile daimios had bethought themselves of flying the Mikado's flag, thus turning the tables on the Shogun, and declaring him a rebel *de jure*. The last but one of the Shoguns was a lad and a puppet, but those who advised him made counter-advances to the Mikado in self-defence, thus accepting the false position the hostile daimios had made for them. The last of the Shoguns, elected from a rival family—he was a cadet of the powerful family of Mito—was a singularly clear-sighted man, and probably he discerned the signs of the times as plainly as anybody. He accepted office with pretended reluc-

tance ; by certain stipulations he insisted upon, he admitted himself to be merely a viceroy and commander-in-chief, charged with carrying out the wishes of the Mikado and leading the forces of the empire. He was ambitious, no doubt, or he would not have put himself forward in these troublous times ; but his ambition was regulated by sound judgment. By taking office on the terms he did, he opened for his ambition a double alternative. Things might settle back into the old position, in which case he might again be governor *de facto*, as his predecessors had been. Or if the Shogunate was doomed, as was much more likely, he might resign his state without loss of dignity, and still remain the foremost man in the country, administering affairs as minister of the Mikado. It would only be exchanging his residence in Yeddo for a residence in Kioto.

Things turned out as he probably expected, and we need not trace their history. The Shogun was driven to abdicate, but he had to abdicate under the pressure of unsuccessful campaigns, and far too late for the fulfilment of that alternative hope of his. The victors spared his life and his property ; and although he has since been recalled to inferior office, it is probable that he has passed from the history of Japan. One sharp successful war had dispossessed him. A second campaign disposed of his north-eastern allies, who had tried to revenge and restore him, in their jealousy of the south-western daimios. The Mikado remains, nominally, absolute master ; actually, exercising such an authority as none either of his predecessors or of the Shoguns had ever exercised in the long annals of the empire. He—or his advisers—lost not a moment in putting his newly-regained powers to the test. They struck while the metal was

hot with a vengeance, and sent showers of sparks flying over the length and breadth of the country, that might have caused explosions everywhere among a far less inflammable people. Yet, until the other day, everything passed off peaceably ; and now we are assured that the recent disturbances are a mere question of the popularity of a foreign war. We ask ourselves question upon question, and can find satisfactory answers to none of them, if we are to judge by historical precedent elsewhere, or our ideas of human nature all the world over. Who were the real promoters of the revolution ? Were they the four great daimios whose names have been put forward so conspicuously, or were they adroit wire-pullers in humbler ranks, who made use of their great men for their own purposes ? What was the spell they used to subvert the most sacred institutions, to conciliate the feelings and the prejudices, of the nation ? Did it all originate—as we are told it originated—in a profound veneration for the Mikado's person and office ? How came it that the victorious daimios were prevailed upon to execute a happy despatch—to part with their authority and their lands, and their formidable military following ? Then there are a variety of other questions, with respect to the future, scarcely less interesting, and of more practical consequence. We should be glad to know, for example, who are the real rulers of the country ; what is the actual state of feeling under the apparent calm ; how the foreigners are regarded, for they have undoubtedly been at the bottom of everything ; what has become of the hordes of disbanded swordsmen whose occupation is gone, and who are reduced to penury ; whether the secularised and disendowed priests of a once popular religion still retain their



hold on their devotees, and are disposed to preach a holy war by invoking the support of the interests that have suffered. And last, but not least, comes the financial question; indeed it must take precedence of all the others, in states that rank as Japan aspires to do. Will the new financial machinery, so suddenly improvised, support the strain of those heavy burdens that are the consequence of this general imitation of all things European?

On all these points we own we can hazard nothing better than conjecture; and it is the very uncertainty in which they are involved that has induced us to call attention to affairs in Japan. The most trustworthy authorities frankly confess themselves puzzled, while more credulous individuals are content to accept Japanese explanations—which is simply absurd. Only time can elicit the truth, and time is likely to bring it out speedily, if matters keep moving as they have been doing hitherto. It is possible that some of these problems may be left unsolved for the benefit of posterity, for we are never likely to have better means of forming an opinion than at present,—and at present we are all abroad—as to the action of the insurgent daimios, for instance, and the use they made of the Mikado's name. Iwakaura, the present prime minister, volunteered an explanation to Baron Hübnér, the Austrian *diplomat*, whose account of Japan is the best that has lately been published. Iwakaura's explanation was that the Shogunate had been accumulating a heavy load of unpopularity, while the principle of veneration for the Mikado had remained profoundly rooted in every heart in the country. In other words, it only needed an appeal to that veneration to work miracles; when by a sudden process, resembling that of religious revivals in our

own country, it softened simultaneously the hearts of all the daimios in a moment of intense political agitation, and made them sacrifice, in evidence of their sincerity, everything they had most dearly cherished. These unselfish converts to a patriotic principle commenced their revolt with a combined attack on the palace of the Mikado, and a violation of the sanctity of his sacred person. Having once mastered his person, they sent out their proclamations in his name; and in the ecstatic sublimity of its reviving faith, the country resigned itself to the most revolutionary measures, ignoring all that was suspicious in the transaction. We may grant readily enough that the people prudently pretended a faith they did not feel, and shrank from trying conclusions with the forces of the victorious princes. But what are we to think of the conduct of the daimios themselves? The Princes of Satsuma, Chosiu, Hitzen, and Tosa had overthrown the Shogun, apparently because he was menacing their feudal authority, or at least because he seemed likely to increase his own in virtue of his more intimate relations with the strangers. And the first step they took after this victory was to resign all they had been fighting for, and infinitely more than any one would have dreamed of exacting of them, even had they been prostrated in a series of disastrous campaigns. They volunteered the abolition of the feudal system, to which they owed their very existence. They offered guarantees for their sincerity by resigning the bulk of their vast territories into the possession of the Crown. They surrendered their valued titles of honour. They consented to receive Crown *préfets* into their hereditary dominions, to administer them absolutely in the name of the central authority. In further proof of straightforward dealing, they

consented to direct upon Yeddo all the troops they did not disband, with all that *matériel* of war whose costly accumulation had probably been at the bottom of the overthrow of the Shogun.

Let us admit, for the sake of argument, that the four leaders of the movement did all this for a blind—that they knew they could make better use of their men and *matériel* at the capital than in their outlying dominions. The admission is quite inconsistent with the fact that six-and-thirty other daimios, openly opposed to the movement, or else outsiders, imitated them blindly. The memorable document, the protocol of the political *hara-kiri* they were executing, was drawn up by the Minister Kido, who has taken a leading part in the revolution all along. Till then Kido had been a simple Samurai of the Prince of Chosiu, and his remarkable ability and sagacity are beyond all dispute. This is one of the passages embodied in his famous State paper: “The place where we live is the property of the Mikado, and the food we eat is grown by his subjects. How then can we make the land we possess our own?” It is as audacious a bit of humour as we have ever come across, considering what manner of men they were whose ideas it professed to embody. These were the men who had made themselves unconstitutionally absolute in the course of seven hundred years, and it was late in the day to ask so delicate a question without a syllable of apology for deferring it so long. Yet if the daimios have been playing a game hypocritically in their own ambitious interests, it must be admitted that the game is a very desperate one. They had so very little to gain, and so very much to lose. Only one of them could attain to a dictatorship, and that he could not make hereditary;

while the rest have in any case taken a step they cannot recede from, even should they care to provoke a counter-revolution. There is no restoring a feudal system that has been the gradual growth of centuries. They have broken up their clans, and subverted the castes on which their feudal supremacy depended. Their disbanded swordsmen are seeking service in the national army, or betaking themselves to the agriculture and handicrafts they used formerly to despise. Either they have been hoodwinked into the most unparalleled act of abnegation recorded in history, or in their short-sighted ambition they have been guilty of a most egregious and suicidal piece of folly.

It is possible that their self-sacrifice may be for the permanent benefit of the empire; and that Japan may date a new era of prosperity from the self-denying ordinance promulgated by its nobles. In the course of half-a-dozen years, Japan has transformed itself into a civilised kingdom, and has advanced itself more decidedly in many respects than some of the ancient monarchies of Europe. It has State Councils and Privy Councils—a house of representatives, subdivided into committees; it has sixty-six *arrondissements*, each with its *préfet*; it has railways and telegraphs, mints and educational establishments with European professors; it has sent its legations abroad, resident or with roving commissions; and it has a national debt that bids fair to increase rapidly if the credit of the country holds good. But if the successive coatings of civilised varnish have not been laid on far too quick, the atmosphere of Japan must be altogether exceptional. The revolution was in no sense a popular one, whatever its promoters may allege. If the people have the vigour of intellect they are credited



with, the country must be pregnant with the elements of discontent and disturbance. There are the inferior daimios, whose teeth have been filed and whose claws have been cut, and who must begin to repent their surrender when they become conscious of their comparative impotency. There are the priests of Buddha, who may consider the permission to marry but poor compensation for the loss of the endowments and offerings they could have afforded to marry upon. There are the lower orders, who used to flock in crowds to the temples of Buddha, and who are now commanded to go back to the established church, and return to the more orthodox worship of Shinto. There is the vexatious imposition of increased taxes, which must be rigorously enforced if the Government is to pay its way. In old times the feudal vassals paid contributions in kind; and they paid nothing or very little when the rice crop was a failure. In old times it was only the agriculturists who paid, and the industrial and commercial classes escaped altogether. Now, all are rated alike. Nor is the Government content to interfere merely with the consciences and the pockets of its subjects — both of them points on which men are extremely sensitive all the world over. It extends its initiatory regulations to their persons, and nothing is too great or too small to be legislated for in elaborate detail. Nowadays the greatest nobles are denied the liberty of living where they please. Formerly, they were bound to spend half the year in the capital of the Mikado; now, they must pass the whole of the twelve months there, and are forbidden to reside on their patrimonial domains. It may be right to put a stop to the sale of young girls, and to restrict the unbounded licence of divorce. But it was a strong measure to lay

down sumptuary laws for the ladies' toilets, and to compel every Japanese to cut his top-lock and let his hair grow all over his head. These miscellaneous measures of all sorts and sizes may be right and wise in themselves, or they may not. But this much seems certain, that no nation with a real capacity for progress and self-education can sit down complacently and contentedly under legislation at once so trivial and imperious.

In making our rapid summary of the vested interests that have been injured or outraged, we have left one class for special mention, because our countrymen settled in Japan are specially concerned in its future. We have no means of estimating the numbers of the disbanded Samurais. We only know that each of the daimios used to entertain a host of these irregulars, according to his degree and the extent of his revenues; that, as we said, Satsuma and Hitzenthought nothing of bringing fifty thousand men into the field, or of keeping a fifth of that number on permanent garrison duty at Yeddo. And we know that, roughly speaking, the new national army, including the line and the imperial guard, consists of no more than some thirty infantry battalions. A few of the Samurais have taken service with the Government; the rest are thrown on their wits and the world. These are the men who would have turned Ronins a few years ago, roaming the country in search of reckless adventure. Some very inadequate provision has been made for them by the legislature, and they are officially recommended to betake themselves to more peaceful professions. Even were they ready and willing to do so, it must be long before industrial society could absorb so many individuals utterly unfitted by previous training for ordinary work. But in reality, work

of any kind must be intensely repugnant to their training and tastes. It is derogating from their superiority of caste, and renouncing their *esprit de corps*. Agriculture is relatively respectable; but it can scarcely be pleasant for a Court swashbuckler to exchange the sword for the spade. As for handicrafts, they are contemptible, and commerce is still more so. Thus these men who are strong enough to coerce the community, and who possibly might get the better of the troops of the State in spite of breech-loaders and rifled field-pieces, have everything in the world to gain by a revolution. Even domestic disturbances or a foreign war would restore them in the mean time their old occupation. And in the event either of a revolution or an *émeute*, what would be their feelings towards foreign merchants and the foreign legations? for it is certainly foreign interference that has turned their world upside down.

So far as we can judge, a knot of able and pushing statesmen are the only persons who as yet have profited by the changes, and all of these are adventurers more or less. There are Iwakaura, who is Provisional Prime Minister; and Sanjo, who was President of the Council. Both are men of the first rank and connections, but they are both taken from the class of the Kugos or nobles of the Court of the Mikado, and the Kugos had neither the territorial influence nor warlike following of the daimios. There is Kido, whom we have already spoken of, perhaps the ablest of them all; and there is Okuma. Kido came to power as delegate for the Chosiu clan, as Okuma for the Hijien, and Itagaki for the Satsuma; and previous to the revolution, Kido was nothing but an ordinary Samurai,

while Okuma was a humble student on his promotion. Whether they worked upon more powerful men or were put forward by them, it appears clear that at the present moment they actually direct the State policy. In other words, the formidable elements of the old society are being dexterously set off against each other, by sleight-of-hand or shrewdness of brain. The recent troubles are said to have arisen out of the question of the Corea war, and it is reported that they have been pretty nearly suppressed. Yet the symptoms were very ominous. There was an attempt to assassinate Iwakaura, which nearly proved successful; and men who are well informed assure us that the mutiny in the island of Kiusiu is believed to have been fomented by those princes of Satsuma, Tosa, and Chosiu, who already begin to repent the precipitate surrender of their feudal powers. Be that as it may, it is certain that the disbanded Samurais must have set their hearts upon a foreign war, and that the pacific policy of the present Minister must have gone far to aggravate the prevailing discontent. We hope the best, because everything we have lately seen of them assures us that the Japanese have great capabilities for improvement. But just because they have great capabilities, because they have shown themselves thoughtful and intelligent, with quick feelings and earnest convictions, we can hardly help apprehending the worse. The Ministry who have made the revolution must understand their countrymen far better than we do, and may be able to guide it through shoals and breakers. In any case, the progress of events must speedily give us a clue to the *dénouement* of the historical drama.



## THE STORY OF VALENTINE;

## AND HIS BROTHER.

## PART VI.—CHAPTER XVI.

DICK BROWN got up very early next morning, with the same sense of exhilaration and light-heartedness which had moved him on the previous night. To be sure he had no particular reason for it, but what of that? People are seldom so truly happy as when they are happy without any cause. He was early in his habits, and his heart was too gay to be anything but restless. He got up though it was not much past five o'clock, and took his turn at the pump in the yard, which formed the entire toilet arrangements of the tramps' lodging-house, and then strolled down with his hands in his pockets and his ruddy countenance shining fresh from these ablutions, to where the river shone blue in the morning sunshine at the foot of Coffin Lane. Dick had passed through Windsor more than once in the course of his checkered existence. He had been here with his tribe—those curious unenjoying slaves of pleasure who are to be found wherever there is merrymaking, little as their share may be in the mirth—on the 4th of June, the great *fête* day of Eton, and on the occasion of reviews in the great Park, and royal visits; so the place was moderately familiar to him, as so many places were all over the country. He strolled along the raised path by the water-side, with a friendly feeling for the still river, sparkling in the still sunshine, without boat or voice to break its quiet, which he thought to himself had "brought him luck," a new friend, and perhaps a long succession of odd jobs. Dick and his

mother did very fairly on the whole in their wandering life. The shillings and sixpences which they picked up in one way or another kept them going, and it was very rare when they felt want. But the boy's mind was different from his fate; he was no adventurer—and though habit had made the road and his nomadic outdoor life familiar to him, yet he had never taken to it quite kindly. The thing of all others that filled him with envy was one of those little tidy houses or pretty cottages which abound in every English village, or even on the skirts of a small town, with a little flower-garden full of flowers, and pictures on the walls inside. The lad had said to himself times without number, that there indeed was something to make life sweet—a settled home, a certain place where he should rest every night and wake every morning. There was no way in his power by which he could attain to that glorious conclusion; but he thus secured what is the next best thing to success in this world, a distinct conception of what he wanted, an ideal which was possible and might be carried out. He sat down upon the bank, swinging his feet over the mass of gravel which the workmen, beginning their morning work, were fishing up out of the river, and contemplating the scene before him, which, but for them, would have been noiseless as midnight. The irregular wooden buildings which flanked the rafts opposite looked picturesque in the morning light, and the soft water rippled up to the edge of the planks,

reflecting everything,—pointed roof and lattice window, and the wonderful assembly of boats. It was not hot so early in the morning; and even had it been hot, the very sight of that placid river, sweeping in subdued silvery tints, cooled down from all the pictorial warmth and purple-glory of the evening, must have cooled and refreshed the landscape. The clump of elm-trees on the Brocas extended all their twinkling leaflets to the light; lower down, a line of white houses, with knots of shrubs and stunted trees before each, attracted Dick's attention. Already lines of white clothes put up to dry betrayed at once the occupation and the industry of the inhabitants. If only his mother was of that profession, or could adopt it, Dick thought to himself,—how sweet it would be to live there, with the river at hand and the green meadow-grass between—to live there for ever and ever, instead of wandering and tramping about the dusty roads!

There was no dust anywhere 'on that clear fresh morning. The boy made no comment to himself upon the still beauty of the scene. He knew nothing of the charm of reflection and shadow, the soft tones of the morning brightness, the cool green of the grass; he could not have told why they were beautiful, but he felt it somehow, and all the sweetness of the early calm. The great cart-horse standing meditative on the water's edge, with its head and limbs relieved against the light sky; the rustling of the gravel as it was shoveled up, all wet and shining, upon the bank; the sound of the workmen's operations in the heavy boat from which they were working,—gave a welcome sense of "company" and fellowship to the friendly boy; and for the rest, his soul was bathed in the sweetness of the morning. After a while he went higher up the stream and bathed more than

his soul—his body too, which was much the better for the bath; and then came back again along the Brocas, having crossed in the punt by which some early workmen went to their occupation, pondering many things in his mind. If a fellow could get settled work now here—a fellow who was not so fortunate as to have a mother who could take in washing! Dick extended his arms as he walked, and stretched himself, and felt able for a man's work, though he was only sixteen—hard work, not light—a good long day, from six in the morning till six at night; what did he care how hard the work was, so long as he was off the road, and had some little nook or corner of his own—he did not even mind how tiny—to creep into, and identify as his, absolutely his, and not another's? The cottages facing to the Brocas were too fine and too grand for his aspirations. Short of the ambitious way of taking in washing, he saw no royal road to such comfort and splendour; but homelier places no doubt might be had. What schemes were buzzing in his young head as he walked back towards Coffin Lane! He had brought out a hunch of bread with him, which his mother had put aside last night, and which served for breakfast, and satisfied him fully. He wanted no delicacies of a spread table, and dreams of hot coffee did not enter his mind. On winter mornings, doubtless, it was tempting when it was to be had in the street, and pennies were forthcoming; but it would have been sheer extravagance on such a day. The bread was quite enough for all Dick's need; but his mind was busy with projects ambitious and fanciful. He went back to the lodging-house to find his mother taking the cup of weak tea without milk which was her breakfast; and, as it was still too



early to go to his appointment with Val, begged her to come out with him that he might talk to her; there was no accommodation for private talk in the tramps' lodging-house, although most of the inmates by this time were gone upon their vagrant course. Dick took his mother out by the river-side again, and led her to a grassy bank above the gravel-heap and the workmen, where the white houses on the Brocas, and the waving lines of clean linen put out to dry, were full in sight. He began the conversation cunningly, with this practical illustration of his discourse before his eyes.

"Mother," said Dick, "did you never think as you'd like to try staying still in one place and getting a little bit of a home?"

"No, Dick," said the woman, hastily; "don't ask me—I couldn't do it. It would kill me if I were made to try."

"No one aint agoing to make you," said Dick, soothingly; "but look here, mother—now tell me, didn't you ever try?"

"Oh yes, I've tried—tried hard enough—till I was nigh dead of it—"

"I can't remember, mother."

"It was before your time," she said, with a sigh and uneasy movement—"before you were born."

Dick did not put any further questions. He had never asked anything about his father. A tramp's life has its lessons as well as a lord's, and Dick was aware that it was not always expedient to inquire into the life, either public or private, of your predecessors. He had not the least notion that there had been anything particular about his father, but took it for granted that he must have been such a one as Joe or Jack, in rough coat and knotted handkerchief, a wanderer like the rest. He accepted the facts

of existence as they stood without making any difficulties, and therefore he did not attempt to "worrit" his mother by further reference to the past, which evidently did "worrit" her. "Well, never mind that," he said; "you shan't never be forced to anything if I can help it. But if so be as I got work, and it was for my good to stay in a place—supposing it might be here?"

"Here's different," said his mother, dreamily.

"That's just what I think," cried Dick, too wise to ask why; "it's a kind of a place where a body feels free like, where you can be gone to-morrow if you please—the forest handy and Ascot handy, and barges as will give you a lift the moment as you feel it the right thing to go. That's just what I wanted to ask you, mother. If I got a spell of work along of that young swell as I'm going to see, or anything steady, mightn't we try? If you felt on the go any day, you might just take the road again and no harm done; or if you felt as you could sit still and make yourself comfortable in the house——"

"I could never sit still and make myself comfortable," she said; "I can't be happy out of the air, Dick—I can't breathe; and sitting still was never my way—nor you couldn't do it neither," she added, looking in his face.

"Oh, couldn't I though!" said Dick, with a laugh. "Mother, you don't know much about me. I am not one to grumble, I hope—but if you'll believe me, the thing I'd be proudest of would be to be bound prentis and learn a trade."

"Dick!"

"I thought you'd be surprised. I know I'm too old now, and I know it's no good wishing," said the boy. "Many and many's the time I've lain awake of nights thinking of it; but I saw as it wasn't to be done no—"

how, and never spoke. I've give up that free and full, mother, and never bothered you about what couldn't be; so you won't mind if I bother a bit now. If I could get a long spell of work, mother dear! There's them men at the gravel, and there's a deal of lads like me employed about the rafts; and down at Eton they're wanted in every corner, for the fives-courts and the rackets, and all them things. Now supposing as this young swell has took a fancy to me, like I have to him—and supposing as I get work—let's say supposing, for it may never come to nothing,—wouldn't you stay with me a bit, mother, and try and make a home?"

"I'd like to see the gentleman, Dick," said his mother, ignoring his appeal.

"The gentleman!" said the boy, a little disappointed. And then he added, cheerily—"Well, mother dear, you shall see the gentleman, partickler if you'll stay here a bit, and I have regular work, and we get a bit of an 'ome."

"He would never come to your home, lad—not the likes of him."

"You think a deal of him, mother. He mightn't come to Coffin Lane; I daresay as the gentlemen in college don't let young swells go a-visiting there. But you take my word, you'll see him; for he's taken a fancy to me, I tell you. There's the quarter afore ten chiming. I must be off now, mother; and if anything comes in the way you'll not go against me? not when I've set my heart on it, like this?"

"I'll stay—a bit—to please you, Dick," said the woman. And the lad sprang up and hastened away with a light heart. This was so much gained. He went quickly down, walking on through the narrow High Street of Eton to the great red house in which his new friend was. Grinder's was an institution in

the place, the most important of all the Eton boarding-houses, though only a dame's, not a master's house. The elegant young Grinder, who was Val's tutor, was but a younger branch of this exalted family, and had no immediate share in the grandeurs of the establishment, which was managed by a dominie or dame, a lay member of the Eton community, who taught nothing, but only superintended the meals and morals of his great houseful of boys. Such personages have no place in Eton proper—the Eton of the Reformation period, so to speak—but they were very important in Val's time. Young Brown went to a side door, and asked for Mr Ross with a little timidity. He was deeply conscious of the fact that he was nothing but "a cad"—not a kind of visitor whom either dame or tutor would permit "one of the gentlemen" to receive; and, indeed, I think Dick would have been sent ignominiously away but for his frank and open countenance, and the careful washing, both in the river and out of it, which he had that morning given himself. He was told to wait; and he waited, noting, with curious eyes, the work of the great house which went on under his eyes, and asking himself how he would like to be in the place of the young curly-headed footman who was flying about through the passages, up-stairs and down, on a hundred errands; or the other aproned functionary who was visible in a dark closet at a distance, cleaning knives with serious persistence, as if life depended on it. Dick decided that he would not like this mode of making his livelihood. He shrank even from the thought—I cannot tell why, for he had no sense of pride, and knew no reason why he should not have taken service in Grinder's, where the servants, as



well as the other inmates, lived on the fat of the land, and wanted for nothing; but somehow his fancy was not attracted by such a prospect. He watched the cleaner of knives, and the curly-headed footman in his livery, with interest; but not as he watched the lads on the river, whose life was spent in launching boats and withdrawing them from the water in continual succession. He had no pride; and the livery and the living were infinitely more comfortable than anything he had ever known. "His mind did not go with it," he said to himself; and that was all it was necessary to say.

While he was thus meditating, Valentine Ross, in correct Eton costume—black coat, high hat, and white necktie—fresh from his tutor, with books under his arm, came in, and spied him where he stood waiting. Val's face lightened up into pleased recognition,—more readily than Dick's did, who was slow to recognise in this solemn garb the figure which he had seen in undress dripping from the water. "Hollo, Brown!" said Val; "I am glad you have kept your time. Come up-stairs and I'll give you what I promised you." Dick followed his patron up-stairs, and through a long passage to Val's room. "Come in," said Val, rummaging in a drawer of his bureau for the half-crown with which he meant to present his assistant of last night. Dick entered timidly, withdrawing his cap from his head. The room was quite small, the bed folded up, as is usual at Eton. The bureau, or writing-desk with drawers, adorned by a red-velvet shelf on the top, stood in one corner, and a set of book-shelves similarly decorated in another; a heterogeneous collection of pictures, hung as closely as possible, the accumulation of two years, covered the walls; some little carved brackets of stained wood

held little plaster figures, not badly modelled, in which an Italian image-seller drove a brisk trade among the boys. A blue and black coat, in bright stripes (need I add that Val—august distinction—was in the Twenty-Two?), topped by a cap of utterly different but equally bright hues—the colours of the house—hung on the door; a fine piece of colour, if perhaps somewhat violent in contrast. The window was full of bright geraniums, which grew in a box outside, and garlanded with the yellow canariensis and wreaths of sweet-peas. Dick looked round upon all these treasures, his heart throbbing with admiration, and something that would have been envy had it been possible to hope or wish for anything so beautiful and delightful for himself; but as this was not possible, the boy's heart swelled with pleasure that his young patron should possess it, which was next best. "Wait a moment," cried Val, finding, as he pursued his search, a note laid upon his bureau, which had been brought in in his absence; and Dick stood breathless, gazing round him, glad of the delay which gave him time to take in every detail of this school-boy palace into his mind. The note was about some momentous piece of business,—the domestic economy of that one of "the boats" in which Val rowed number seven, with hopes of being stroke when Jones left next Election. He bent his brows over it, and seizing paper and pen, wrote a hasty answer, for such important business cannot wait. Dick, watching his movements, felt with genuine gratification that here was another commission for him. But his patron's next step made his countenance fall, and filled his soul with wonder. Val opened his door, and with stentorian voice shouted "Lower boy!" into the long passage. There was a momentary pause, and

then steps were heard in all directions up and down, rattling over the bare boards, and about half-a-dozen young gentlemen in a lump came tumbling into the room. Val inspected them with lofty calm, and held out his note to the last comer, over the heads of the others. "Take this to Benton at Guerre's," he said, with admirable brevity; and immediately the messenger departed, the little crowd melted away, and the two boys were again alone.

"I say, I mustn't keep you here," said Val; "my dame mightn't like it. Here's your half-crown. Have you got anything to do yet? I think you're a handy fellow, and I shouldn't mind saying a word for you if I had the chance. What kind of place do you want?"

"I don't mind what it is," said Dick. "I'd like a place at the rafts awful, if I was good enough; or anything, sir. I don't mind, as long as I can make enough to keep me—and mother; that's all I care."

"Was that your mother?" said Val. "Do you work for her too?"

"Well, sir, you see she can make a deal in our old way. She is a great one with the cards when she likes, but she won't never do it except when we're hard up and she's forced; for she says she has to tell the things she sees, and they always comes true: but what I want is to stay in one place, and get a bit of an 'ome together—and she aint good for gentlemen's washing or that sort, worse luck," said Dick, regretfully. "So you see, sir, if she stays still to please me, I'll have to work for her, and good reason. She's been a good mother to me, never going on the loose, nor that, like other women do. I don't grudge my work."

Val did not understand the curious tingling that ran through his veins. He was not consciously thinking of his own mother, but yet it

was something like sympathy that penetrated his sensitive mind. "I wish I could help you," he said, doubtfully. "I'd speak to the people at the rafts, but I don't know if they'd mind me. I'll tell you what, though," he added, with sudden excitement. "I can do better than that—I'll get Lichen to speak to them! They might not care for me—but they'll mind what Lichen says."

Dick received reverentially and gratefully, but without understanding the full grandeur of the idea, this splendid promise—for how should the young tramp have known, what I am sure the reader must divine, that Lichen was that Olympian demigod and king among men, the Captain of the Boats? If Lichen had asked the Queen for anything, I wonder if her Majesty would have had the courage to refuse him? but at all events nobody about the river dared to deny him. To be spoken to by Lichen was, to an ordinary mortal, distinction enough to last him half his (Eton) days. Dick did not see the magnificence of the prospect thus opened to him, but Val knew all that was implied in it, and his countenance brightened all over. "I don't think they can refuse Lichen anything," he said. "Look here, Brown; meet us at the rafts after six, and I'll tell you what is done. I wish your mother would tell me my fortune. Lots of fellows would go to her if they knew; but then the masters wouldn't like it, and there might be a row."

"Bless you, sir, mother wouldn't—not for the Bank of England," cried Dick. "She might tell *you* yours, if I was to ask her. Thank you kindly, sir; I'll be there as sure as life. It's what I should like most."

"If Lichen speaks for you, you'll get it," said Val; "and I know



Harry wants boys. You're a good boy, aint you?" he added, looking at him closely—"you look it. And mind, if we recommend you, and you're found out to be rowdy or bad after, and disgrace us, Lichen will give you such a licking! Or for that matter, I'll do it myself."

"I'm not afraid," said Dick. "I aint rowdy; and if I get a fixed place and a chance of making a home, you just try me, and see if I'll lose my work for the sake of pleasure. I aint that sort."

"I don't believe you are," said Val; "only it's right I should warn you; for Lichen aint a fellow to stand any nonsense, and no more am I. Do you think that's pretty? I'm doing it, but I haven't the time."

This was said in respect to a piece of wood-carving, which Valentine had begun in the beginning of the year, and which lay there, like many another enterprise commenced, gathering dust but approaching no nearer to completion. Dick surveyed it with glowing eyes.

"I saw some like it in a shop as I came down. Oh, how I should like to try! I've cut things myself out of a bit of wood with an old knife, and sold them at the fair."

"And you think you could do this without any lessons?" said Val, laughing; "just take and try it. I wonder what old Fullady would

say! there are the saws and things. But look here, you'll have to go, for it's time for eleven o'clock school. Take the whole concern with you, quick, and I'll give you five bob if you can finish it. Remember after six, at the rafts to-night."

Thus saying, the young patron pushed his *protégé* before him out of the room, laden with the wood-carving, and rushed off himself with a pile of books under his arm. All the boys in the house seemed flooding out, and all the boys in Eton to be pouring in different directions, one stream intersecting another, as Dick issued forth filled with delight and hope. He had not a corner to which he could take the precious bit of work he had been intrusted with—nothing but the common room of the tramps' lodging-house. Oh for a "home," not so grand as Val's little palace, but anything that would afford protection and quiet—a place to decorate and pet like a child! This feeling grew tenfold stronger in Dick's heart as he sat wistfully on the river's bank, and looked across at the rafts, in which were sublime possibilities of work and wages. How he longed for the evening! How he counted the moments as the day glowed through its mid hours, and the sun descended the western sky, and the hour known in these regions as "after six" began to come down softly on Eton and the world!

#### CHAPTER XVII.

Dick's mother sat upon the bank where he had left her, with her hands clasping her knees, and her abstract eyes gazing across the river into the distance, seeing scarcely anything before her, but seeing much which was not before her, nor could be. A tramp has no room to sit in, no domestic duties to do, even were she disposed to do them;

and to sit thus in a silent musing, or without even musing at all, in mere empty leisure, beaten upon by wind and sun, was as characteristic of her wandering life as were the long fatigues of the road along which at other times she would plod for hours, or the noisy tumult of race-course or fair through which she often carried her serious face

and abstract eyes—a figure always remarkable and never having any visible connection with the scene in which she was. But this day she was as she had not been for years. The heart which fulfilled its ordinary pulsations in her breast calmly and dully on most occasions, like something far off and scarcely belonging to her, was now throbbing high with an emotion which influenced every nerve and fibre of her frame. It had never stilled since last night when she heard Val's name sounding clear through the sunnyside, and saw the tall well-formed boy, with his wet jersey clinging to his shoulders, moving swiftly away from her, a vision, but more substantial than any other vision. Her old heart, the heart of her youth, had leaped back into life at that moment; and instead of the muffled beating of the familiar machine which had simply kept her alive all these years, a something full of independent life, full of passion, and eagerness, and quick-coming fancies, and hope, and fear, had suddenly come to life within her bosom. I don't know if her thoughts were very articulate. They could scarcely have been so, uneducated, untrained, undisciplined soul as she was—a creature ruled by impulses, and with no hand to control her; but as she sat there, and saw her placid Dick go happily off, to meet the other lad who was to him “a young swell,” able to advance and help him, one to whom he had taken a sudden fancy, he could not tell why,—the strangeness of the situation roused her to an excitement which she was incapable of subduing. “It mayn't be him after all—it mayn't be him after all,” she said to herself, watching Dick till he disappeared into the distance. She would have given all she had (it was not much) to go with him, and look face to face upon the other. It

seemed to her that she must know at the first glance whether it was *him* or not. But, indeed, she had no doubt that it was *him*. For I do not attempt to make any pretence at deceiving the well-informed and quick-sighted reader, who knows as well as I do who this woman was. She had carried on her wandering life, the life which she had chosen, for the last eight years, exposed to all the vicissitudes of people in her condition, sometimes in want, often miserable, pursuing in her wild freedom a routine as mechanically fixed as that of the most rigid conventional life, and bound, had she known it, by as unyielding a lacework of custom as any that could have affected the life of the Honourable Mrs Richard Ross, the wife of the Secretary of Legation. But she did not know this, poor soul; and besides, all possibility of that other existence, all hold upon it or thought of it, had disappeared out of her horizon for sixteen years.

Sixteen years! a large slice out of a woman's life who had not yet done more than pass the half-way milestone of human existence. She had never possessed so much even of the merest rudimentary education as to know what the position of Richard Ross's wife meant, except that it involved living in a house, wearing good clothes, and being surrounded by people of whom she was frightened, who did not understand her, and whom she could not understand. Since her flight back into her natural condition, the slow years had brought to her maturing mind thoughts which she understood as little. She was not more educated, more clever, nor indeed more clear in her confused fancies, than when she gave back one of her boys, driven thereto by a wild sense of justice, into his father's keeping; but many strange



things had seemed to pass before her dreamy eyes since then,—things she could not fathom, vague visions of what might have been right, of what was wrong. These had come to little practical result, except in so far that she had carefully preserved her boy Dick from contact with the evil around—had trained him in her way to truth and goodness and some strange sense of honour—had got him even a little education, the faculties of reading and writing, which were to herself a huge distinction among her tribe; and, by keeping him in her own dreamy and silent but pure companionship, had preserved the lad from moral harm. She had, however, a material to work upon which had saved her much trouble. The boy was, to begin with, of a character as incomprehensible to her as were the other vague and strange influences which had shaped her shipwrecked life. He was good, gentle, more advanced than herself, his teacher, in the higher things which she tried to teach him, getting by instinct to conclusions which only painfully and dimly had forced themselves upon her, not subject to the temptations which she expected to move him, not lawless, nor violent, nor hard to control, but full of reason and sense and steady trustworthiness from his cradle. She had by this time got over the surprise with which she had slowly come to recognise in Dick a being totally different from herself. She was no analyst of character, and she had accepted the fact with dumb wonder which did not know how to put itself into words. Even now there awaited her many lesser surprises, as Dick, going on from step to step in life, did things which it never would have occurred to her to do, and showed himself totally impervious to those temptations against which it had been

necessary for her to struggle. His last declaration to her was as surprising as anything that went before it. The nomad's son, who had been "on the tramp" all his life, whose existence had been spent "on the road," alternating between the noisy excitement of those scenes of amusement which youth generally loves, and that dull semi-hibernation of the winter which gives the tramp so keen a zest for the new start of spring,—was it the boy so bred who had spoken to her of a "home," of steady work, and the commonplace existence of a man who had learned a trade? She wondered with a depth of vague surprise which it would be impossible to put into words—for she herself had no words to express what she meant. Had it not happened to chime in with the longing in her own mind to stay here and see the other boy, whose momentary contact had filled her with such excitement, I don't know how she would have received Dick's strange proposal; but in her other agitation it passed without more than an additional but temporary shock of that surprise which Dick constantly gave her; and she did not count the cost of the concession she had made to him, the tacit agreement she had come under to live under a commonplace roof, and confine herself to indoor life during this flush of midsummer weather, for the longing that she had to know something, if only as a distant spectator, of the life and being of that other boy.

After a while she roused herself and went over in the ferry-boat to the other side of the river, where were "the rafts" to which Dick looked with so much anxiety and hope. Everything was very still at the rafts at that sunny hour before mid-day, when Eton, shut up in its schoolrooms, did its constraining drowsily, and dreamed of the delights of "after twelve" without

being able to rush forth and anticipate them. The attendants on the rafts, lightly-clad, softly-stepping figures, in noiseless boating shoes and such imitation of boating costume as their means could afford, were lounging about with nothing to do, seated on the rails drawing in dreary Berkshire speech, or arranging their boats in readiness for the approaching rush. Dick's mother approached along the road, without attracting any special observation, and got into conversation with one or two of these men with the ease which attends social intercourse on these levels of life. "If there is a new hand wanted, my lad is dreadful anxious to come," she said. "Old Harry's looking for a new lad," answered the man she addressed. And so the talk began.

"There was a kind of an accident on the river last night," she said, after a while; "one of the gentlemen got his boat upset, and my lad brought it down——"

"Lord bless you, call that a haccident?" said her informant; "half-a-dozen of 'em swamps every night. They don't mind, nor nobody else."

"The name of this one was—Ross, I think," she said, very slowly; "maybe you'll know him?"

"I know him well enough—he's in the Victory; not half a bad fellow in his way, but awful sharp, and not a bit of patience. I seed him come in dripping wet. He's free with his money, and I daresay he'd pay your lad handsome. If I were you, I'd speak to old Harry himself about the place; and if you say you've a friend or two among them young swells, better luck."

"Is this one what you call a swell?" said the woman.

"Why, he's Mr Ross, aint he? that's Eton for honourable," said one of the men.

"He aint Mr Ross," said an older

and better-informed person, with some contempt. The older attendants at the rafts were walking peerages, and knew everybody's pedigree. "His father was Mister Ross, if you please. He used to be at college in my time; a nice light-haired sort of a lad, not good for much, but with heaps of friends. Not half the pluck of this one: this one's as dark as you, missis, a kind of a foreign-looking blade, and as wilful as the old gentleman himself. But I like that sort better than the quiet ones; the quiet ones does just as much mischief on the sly."

"They're a rare lot, them lads are," said the other—"shouting at a man like's he was the dust under their feet. Aint we their fellow-creatures all the same? It aint much you makes at the rafts, missis, even if you gains a lot in the season. For after all, look how short the season is—you may say just the summer half. It's too cold in March, and it's too cold in October—nothing to speak of but the summer half. You makes a good deal while it lasts, I don't say nothing to the contrary—but what's that to good steady work all round the year?"

"Maybe her lad isn't one for steady work," said another. "It is work, I can tell you is this, as long as it lasts; from early morning to lock-up, never a moment to draw your breath, but school-hours, and holidays, and half-holidays without end. Then there's the regular boating gents as come and go, not constant like the Eton gentlemen. They give a deal of trouble—they do; and as particular with their boats as if they were babies. I tell you what, missis, if you want him to have an easy place, I wouldn't send him here."

"He's not one that's afraid of work," said the woman, "and it's what he's set his heart on. I won-



der if you could tell me now where this Mr Ross comes from?—if he's west-country now, down Devonshire way?"

"Bless you, no," said the older man, who was great in genealogies; "he's from the north, he is—Scotland or thereabouts. His grandfather came with him when he first came to college—Lord something or other. About as like a lord as I am. But the nobility aint much to look at," added this functionary, with whom familiarity had bred contempt. "They're a poor lot them Scotch and Irish lords. Give me a good railway man, or that sort; they're the ones for spending their money. Lord—I cannot think on the old un's name."

"Was it—Eskside?"

"You're a nice sort of body to know about the haristocracy," said the man; "in course it was Eskside. Now, missis, if you knowed, what was the good of coming asking me, taking a fellow in?"

"I didn't know," said the woman, humbly; "I only wanted to know. In my young days, long ago, I knew—a family of that name."

"Ay, ay, in your young days. You were a handsome lass then, I'll be bound," said the old man, with a grin.

"Look here," said one of the others—"here's old Harry coming, if you like to speak to him about your lad. Speak up and don't be frightened. He aint at all a bad sort, and if you tell him as the boy's spry and handy, and don't mind a hard day's work—speak up! only don't say I told you." And the benevolent adviser disappeared hastily, and began to pull about some old gigs which were ranged on the rafts, as if much too busily occupied to spare a word. The woman went up to the master with a heart beating so strongly that she could scarcely hear her own voice. On

any other occasion she would have been shy and reluctant. Asking favours was not in her way—she did not know how to do it. She could not feign or compliment, or do anything to ingratiate herself with a patron. But her internal agitation was so strong that she was quite uplifted beyond all sense of the effort which would have been so trying to her on any other occasion. She went up to him sustained by her excitement, which at the same time blunted her feelings, and made her almost unaware of the very words she uttered.

"Master," she said, going straight to the point, as the excited mind naturally does—"I have a boy that is very anxious for work. He is a good lad, and very kind to me. We've been tramping about the country—nothing better, for all my folks was in that way; but he don't take after me and my folks. He thinks steady work is better, and to stay still in one place."

"He is in the right of it there," was the reply.

"Maybe he is in the right," she said; "I'm not the one to say, for I'm fond of my freedom and moving about. But, master, you'll have one in your place that is not afraid of hard work if you'll have my son."

"Who is your son? do I know him?" said the master, who was a man with a mobile and clean-shaven countenance, like an actor, with a twinkling eye and a suave manner, the father of an athletic band of river-worthies who were regarded generally with much admiration by "the college gentlemen," to whom their prowess was well known,— "who is your son?"

The woman grew sick and giddy with the tumult of feeling in her. The words were simple enough in straightforward meaning; but they bore another sense, which made her

heart flutter, and took the very light from her eyes. "Who was her son?" It was all she could do to keep from betraying herself, from claiming some one else as her son, very different from Dick. If she had done so, she would have been simply treated as a mad woman: as it was, the bystanders, used to tramps of a very different class, looked at her with instant suspicion, half disposed to attribute her giddiness and faltering to a common enough cause. She mastered herself without fully knowing either the risk she had run or the looks directed to her. "You don't know him," she said. "We came here but last night. One of the college gentlemen was to speak for him. He's a good hard-working lad, if you'll take my word for it, that knows him best."

"Well, missis, it's true as you know him best; but I don't know as we can take his mother's word for it. Mothers aint always to be trusted to tell what they know," said the master, good-humouredly. "I'll speak to you another time, for here they are coming. Look sharp, lads."

"All right, sir; here you are."

The tide was coming in—a tide of boys—who immediately flooded the place, pouring up-stairs into the dressing-rooms to change their school garments for boating dress, and gradually occupying the rafts in a moving restless crowd. The woman stood, jostled by the living stream, watching wistfully, while boat after boat shot out into the water,—gigs, with a laughing, restless crew—outriggers, each with a silent inmate, bent on work and practice; for all the school races had yet to be rowed. She stood gazing, with a heart that fluttered wildly, upon all those unknown young faces and animated moving figures. One of them was bound

to her by the closest tie that can unite two human creatures; and yet, poor soul, she did not know him, nor had he the slightest clue to find her out—to think of her as anyhow connected with himself. Her heart grew sick as she gazed and gazed, pausing now upon one face, now upon another. There was one of whom she caught a passing glimpse, as he pushed off into the stream in one of the long-winged dragon-fly boats, who excited her most of all. She could not see him clearly, only a glimpse of him between the crowding figures about;—an oval face, with dark clouds of curling hair pushed from his forehead. There came a ringing in her ears, a dimness in her eyes. Women in her class do not faint except at the most tremendous emergencies. If they did, they would probably be set down as intoxicated, and summarily dealt with. She caught at the wooden railing, and held herself upright by it, shutting her eyes to concentrate her strength. And by-and-by the bewildering sick emotion passed; was it *him* whom she had seen?

After this she crossed the river again in the ferry-boat, though it was a halfpenny each time, and she felt the expenditure to be extravagant, and walked about on the other bank till she found Dick, who naturally adopted the same means of finding her, neither of them thinking of any return "home,"—a place which did not exist in their consciousness. Then they went and bought something in an eating-shop, and brought it out to a quiet corner opposite the "Brocas clump," and there ate their dinner, with the river flowing at their feet, and the skiffs of "the gentlemen" darting by. It was, or rather looked, a poetic meal, and few people passed in sight without a momentary envy of the humble pic-



nic ; but to Dick Brown and his mother there was nothing out of the way in it, and she tied up the fragments for supper in a spotted cotton handkerchief when they had finished. It was natural for them to eat out of doors, as well as to do everything else out of doors. Dick told her of his good luck, how kind Valentine had been, and gave her the half-crown he had received, and an account of all that was to be done for him. "If they don't mind him, they're sure to mind the other gentleman," said devout Dick, who believed in Val's power with a fervent and unquestioned faith. After a while he went across to the rafts, and hung about there ready for any odd job, and making himself conspicuous in eager anxiety to please the master. His mother stayed still, with the fragments of their meal tied up in the handkerchief, on the same grassy bank where they dined, watching the boats as they came and went. She did not understand how it was that they all dropped off one by one, and as suddenly reappeared again when the hour for dinner and the hour of "three o'clock school" passed. But she had nothing to do to call her from that musing and silence to which she had become habituated, and remained there the entire afternoon doing nothing but gaze. At last, however, she made a great effort, and roused herself. The unknown boy after whom she yearned could not be identified among all these strange faces ; and there was something which could be done for good Dick, the boy who had always been good to her. She did for Dick what no one could have expected her to do ; she went and looked for a lodging where they could establish themselves. After a while she found two

small rooms in a house facing the river,—one, in which Dick could sleep, the other a room with a fireplace, where his hot meals, which he no doubt would insist upon, could be cooked, and where, in a corner, she herself could sleep when the day was over. She had a little stock of reserve money on her person, a few shillings saved, and something more, which was the remnant of a sum she had carried about with her for years, and which I believe she intended "to bury her," according to the curious pride which is common among the poor. But as for the moment there was no question of burying her, she felt justified in breaking in upon this little hoard to please her boy by such forlorn attempts at comfort as were in her power. She ventured to buy a few necessaries, and to make provision as well as she knew how for the night—the first night which she would have passed for years under a roof which she could call her own. One of the chief reasons that reconciled her to this step was, that the room faced the river, and that not Dick alone, but the other whom she did not know, could be watched from the window. Should she get to know him, perhaps to speak to him, that other?—to watch him every summer evening in his boat, floating up and down—to distinguish his voice in the crowd, and his step? But for this hope she could not, I think, have made so great a sacrifice for Dick alone—a sacrifice she had not been able to make when the doing of it would have been still more important than now. Perhaps it was because she was growing older, and the individual had faded somewhat from her consciousness ; but the change bewildered even herself. She did it notwithstanding, and of her free will.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

When Dick saw his friend and patron come down to the rafts that evening in company with another of the "gentlemen," bigger, stronger, and older than himself, at whom everybody looked with respect and admiration, the state of his mind may be supposed. He had been hanging about all day, as I have said, making himself useful—a handy fellow, ready to push a boat into the water, to run and fetch an oar, to tie on the sheepskin on a rower's seat, without standing on ceremony as to who told him to do so. The master himself, in the hurry of operations, had given him various orders without perceiving, so willing and ready was Dick, that it was a stranger, and not one of his own men, whom he addressed. Dick contemplated the conversation which ensued with a beating heart. He saw the lads look round, and that Valentine pointed him out to the potentate of the river-side; and he saw one of the men join in, saying something, he was sure, in his favour; and, after a terrible interval of suspense, Val came towards him, waving his hand to him in triumph. "There," cried Val, "we've got you the place. Go and talk to old Harry yourself about wages and things. And mind what I said to you, Brown; neither Lichen nor I will stand any nonsense. We've made all sorts of promises for you; and if you don't keep them, Lichen will kick you—or if he don't, I will. You'd best keep steady, for your own sake."

"I'll keep steady," said Dick, with a grin on his face; and it was all the boy could do to keep himself from executing a dance of triumph when he found himself really engaged at reasonable wages, and informed of the hour at which

he was expected to present himself on the morrow. "Give an eye to my boat, Brown," said Val; "see she's taken care of. I'll expect you to look out for me, and have her ready when you know I'm coming. I hate waiting," said the lad, with imperious good-humour. How Dick admired him as he stood there in his flannels and jersey—the handsomest, splendid, all-commanding young prince, who had stooped from his skies to interfere on his (Dick's) behalf, for no reason in the world except his will and pleasure. "How lucky I am," thought Dick to himself, "that he should have noticed me last night!"—and he made all manner of enthusiastic promises on account of the boat, and in general devotion to Val's service. The young potentate took all these protestations in the very best part. He stepped into his outrigger with lordly composure, while Dick, all glowing and happy, knelt on the raft to hold it. "You shan't want a friend, old fellow, as long as you behave yourself," said Val, with magnificent condescension which it was fine to see. "I'll look after you," and he nodded at him as he shot along over the gleaming water. As for Dick, as his services were not required till next day, he went across the river to Coffin Lane, where his mother was waiting for him, to tell his news. She did not say very much, nor did he expect her to do so, but she took him by the arm and led him along the water-side to a house which stood in a corner, half facing the river, looking towards the sunset. She took him in at the open door, and up-stairs to the room in which she had already set out a homely and very scanty table for their supper. Dick did not know how to express



the delight and thanks in his heart. He turned round and gave his mother a kiss in silent transport—a rare caress, such as meant more than words. The window of this room looked up the river, and straight into the “Brocas clump,” behind which the sunset was preparing all its splendour. In the little room beyond, which was to be Dick’s bedroom—glorious title!—the window looked straight across to the rafts. I do not think that any young squire coming into a fine property was ever more happy than the young tramp finding himself for almost the first time in his life in a place which he could call home. He could not stop smiling, so full of happiness was he, nor seat himself to his poor supper, but went round and round the two rooms, planning where he could put up a shelf or arrange a table. “I’ll make it so handy for you, mother; you’ll not know you’re born!” cried Dick, in the fulness of his delight.

And yet two barer little rooms perhaps no human home ever was made in. There was nothing there that was not indispensable—a table, two chairs, and no more; and in Dick’s room a small iron bed. All that his mother possessed for her own rest was a mattress, which could be rolled up and put aside during the day. She took her son’s pleasure very quietly, as was her wont, but smiled with a sense of having made him happy, which was pleasant to her, although to make him happy had not been her only motive. When she had put away the things from their supper, she sat down at the open window and looked out on the river. The air was full of sound, so softened by the summer that all rudeness and harshness were taken out of it: in the foreground the ferry-boat was crossing and re-crossing, the man standing up with his punt-pole against the glow of

the western sky; just under the window lay the green eyot, waving with young willows, and up and down in a continual stream on the sunny side of it went and came the boys in their boats. “Show him to me, Dick, when he comes,” said the woman. Dick did not require to be told whom she meant, neither was he surprised at this intensity of interest in *him*, which made his young patron the only figure worth identification in that crowded scene. Had he not been, as it were, Dick’s guardian angel, who had suddenly appeared for the boy’s succour?—and what more natural than that Dick’s mother should desire before anything else to see one who had been such a friend to her boy?

But I do not think she was much the wiser when Val came down the river, accompanied by a group of backers on the bank, who had made themselves hoarse shrieking and shouting at him. He was training for a race, and this was one of his trial nights. Lichen himself had agreed to come down to give Val his advice and instructions—or, in more familiar phraseology, was “coaching” him for the important effort. Dick rushed out at the sight, to cheer and shriek too, in an effervescence of loyalty which had nothing to do with the character of Val’s performance. The mother sat at the window and looked out upon them, longing and sickening with a desire unsatisfied. Was this all she was ever to see of him—a distant speck in a flying boat? But to know that this was him—that he was there before her eyes—that he had taken up Dick and established him in his own train, as it were, near to him, by a sudden fancy which to her, who knew what cause there was for it, seemed something like a special interference of God,—filled her with a strange confused rapture

of mingled feelings. She let her tears fall quietly as she sat all alone, gazing upon the scene. It must be God's doing, she felt, since no man had any hand in it. She had separated them in her wild justice, rending her own heart while she did so, but God had brought them together. She was totally untaught, poor soul, in religious matters, as well as in everything else ; but in her ignorance she had reached that point which our high philosophy reaches struggling through the mist, and which nowadays the unsatisfied and over-instructed mind loves to go back to, thinking itself happier with one naked primary truth than with a system however divine. No one could have taken from this dweller in the woods and wilds the sense of a God in the world,—almost half visible, sometimes, to musing, silent souls like her own ; a God always watchful, always comprehensible to the simple mind, in the mere fact of His perpetual watchfulness, fatherliness, yet severity,—sending hunger and cold as well as warmth and plenty, and guiding those revolutions of the seasons and the outdoor facts of existence which impress the untaught yet thoughtful being as nothing learnt by books can ever do. To know as she did that there was a God in the world, and not believe at the same time that His interference was the most natural of all things, would have been impossible to this primitive creature. Therefore, knowing no agencies in the universe but that of man direct and visible, and that of God, which to her could scarcely be called invisible, she believed unhesitatingly that God had done this—that He had balked her, with a hand and power more great than hers. What was to be the next step she could not tell,—it was beyond her : she could only sit and watch how things would befall,

having not only no power but no wish to interfere.

Thus things went on for the remaining portion of the "half," which lasted only about six weeks more. Dick set himself to the work of making everything "handy" for her with enthusiasm in his odd hours, which were few—for his services at the rafts were demanded imperatively from earliest morning till the late evening after sunset, when the river dropped into darkness. "The gentlemen," it is true, were all cleared off their favourite stream by nine o'clock ; but the local lovers of the Thames would linger on it during those summer nights, especially when there was a moon, till poor Dick, putting himself across in his boat when all at last was silent—the last boating party disposed of, and the small craft all ranged in their places ready for to-morrow—would feel his arms scarcely able to pull the light sculls, and his limbs trembling under him. Even then, after his long day's work, when he had eaten his supper, he would set to work to put up the shelves he had promised his mother, or to fix upon his walls the pictures which delighted himself. Dick began with the lowest rudiments of art, the pictures in the penny papers, with which he almost papered his walls. Then his taste advanced as his pennies grew more plentiful : the emotional prints of the 'Police News' ceased to charm him, and he rose to the pictures of the 'Illustrated,' or whatever might be the picture-paper of the time. This advance—so quickly does the mind work—took place in the six weeks that remained of the half ; and by the time "the gentlemen" left, and work slackened, Dick's room was already gorgeous, with here and there a mighty chromo, strong in tint and simple in subject, surrounded with all manner of royal



progresses and shows of various kinds, as represented in the columns of the prints aforesaid. He grew handy, too, in amateur carpentering, having managed to buy himself some simple tools; and when he had a spare moment he betook himself to the bits of simple carving which Ross had handed over to him, and worked at them with a real enjoyment which proved his possession of some germ at least of artistic feeling. The boy never had a moment unemployed with all these occupations, necessary and voluntary. He was as happy as the day was long, always ready with a smile and pleasant word, always sociable, not given to calculating his time too nicely, or to grumbling if some of his "mates" threw upon his willing shoulders more than his share of work. The boating people about got to know him, and among the boys he had already become highly popular. Very grand personages indeed—Lichen himself, for instance, than whom there could be no more exalted being—would talk to him familiarly; and some kind lads, finding out his tastes, brought him pictures of which they themselves had got tired, and little carved brackets from their walls, and much other rubbish of this description, all of which was delightful to Dick.

As for Valentine, the effect produced upon him by the possession of a *protégé* was very striking. He felt the responsibility deeply, and at once began to ponder as to the duties of a superior to his inferiors, of which, of course, one time or other, he had heard much. An anxious desire to do his duty to this retainer who had been so oddly thrown upon his hands, and for whom he felt an unaccountable warmth of patronising friendship, took possession of him. He made

many trite but admirable theories on the subject—theories, however, not at all trite to Val, who believed he had invented them for his own good and that of mankind. It was not enough, he reasoned with himself, to have saved a lad from the life of a tramp, and got him regular employment, unless at the same time you did something towards improving his mind, and training him for the rôle of a respectable citizen. These were very fine words, but Val (strictly within himself) was not afraid of fine words. No young soul of sixteen worth anything ever is. To make a worthy citizen of his waif seemed to him for some time his mission. Having found out that Dick could read, he pondered very deeply and carefully what books to get for him, and how to lead him upon the path of knowledge. With a little sigh he recognised the fact that there was no marked literary turn in Dick's mind, and that he preferred a bit of wood and a knife as a means of relaxation to books. Val hesitated long between the profitable and the pleasant in literature as a means of educating his *protégé*. Whether to rouse him to the practical by accounts of machinery and manufactures, or to rouse his imagination by romance, he could not easily decide. I fear his decision was biassed ultimately by the possession of a number of books which he had himself outgrown, but which he rightly judged might do very well for his humble friend, whose total want of education made him younger than Val by a few years, and therefore still within the range of the 'Headless Horseman,' of Captain Mayne Reid's vigorous productions, and other schoolboy literature of the same class. These he brought down, a few volumes at a time, to the rafts, and gave them to his friend with injunctions to read

them. "You shall have something better when you have gone through these ; but I daresay you'll like them—I used to myself," said Val. Dick accepted them with devout respect ; but I think the greatest pleasure he got out of them was when he ranged them in a little book-shelf he had himself made, and felt as a bibliophile does when he arranges his fine editions, that he too had a library. Dick did not care much for the stories of adventure with which Val fed him as a kind of milk for babes. He knew of adventures on the road, of bivouacs out of doors, quite enough in his own person. But he dearly liked to see them ranged in his book-shelf. All kinds of curious instincts, half developed and unintelligible even to himself, were in Dick's mind,—the habits of a race of which he knew nothing—partially burnt out and effaced by a course of life infinitely different, yet still existing obstinately within him, and prompting him to he knew not what. If we could study human nature as we study fossils and strata, how strange it would be to trace the connection between Dick's rude book-shelves, with the coarse little ornament he had carved on them, and the pleasure it gave him to range Val's yellow volumes upon that rough shelf—and the great glorious green cabinets in Lady Eskside's drawing-room ! Nobody was aware of this connection, himself least of all. And Val, who had an evident right to inherit so refined a taste, cared as little for the Vernis-Martin as though he had been born a savage ; by such strange laws, unknown to us poor gropers after scraps of information, does inheritance go !

All this time, however, Dick's mother had not seen Val more than in his boat, for which she looked through all the sunny afternoons and

long evenings, spending half her silent intent life, so different to the outward one, so full of strange self-absorption and concentrated feeling, in the watch. This something out of herself, to attract her wandering visionary thoughts and hold her passionate heart fast, was what the woman had wanted throughout the strange existence which had been warped and twisted out of all possibility at its very outset. Her wild intolerance of confinement, her desire for freedom, her instinct of constant wandering, troubled her no more. She did her few domestic duties in the morning, made ready Dick's meals for him (and they lived with Spartan simplicity, both having been trained to eat what they could get, most often by the roadside—cold scraps of food which required no preparation), and kept his clothes and her own in order ; and all the long afternoon would sit there watching for the skimming boat, the white jersey, with the distinctive mark which she soon came to recognise. I think Val's jersey had a little red cross on the breast—an easy symbol to recollect. When he came down the river at last, and left his boat, she went in with a sigh, half of relief, from her watch, half of pain that it was over, and began to prepare her boy's supper. They held her whole existence thus in suspense between them ; one utterly ignorant of it, the other not much better informed. When Dick came in, tired but cheery, he would show her the books Mr Ross had brought him, or report to her the words he had said. Dick adored him frankly, with a boy's pride in all his escapades ; and there were few facts in Val's existence which were not known in that little house at the corner, all unconscious as he was of his importance there. One morning, however, Dick approached this unfailing subject with a little



embarrassment, looking furtively at his mother to see how far he might venture to speak.

"You don't ever touch the cards now, mother?" he said all at once, with a guilty air, which she, absorbed in her own thoughts, did not perceive.

"The cards?—I never did when I could help it, you know."

"I know," he said, "but I don't suppose there's no harm in it; it aint you as put them how they come. All you've got to do with it is saying what it means. Folks in the Bible did the same—Joseph, for one, as was carried to the land of Egypt."

The Bible was all the lore Dick had. He liked the Old Testament a great deal better than the 'Headless Horseman;' and, like other well-informed persons, he was glad to let his knowledge appear when there was an occasion for such exhibitions. His mother shook her head.

"It's no harm, maybe, to them that think no harm," she said; "no, it aint me that settles them—who is it? It must be either God or the devil. And God don't trouble Himself with the like of that—He has more and better to do; so it must be the devil; and I don't hold with it, unless I'm forced for a living. I can't think as it's laid to you then."

"I wish you'd just do it once to please me, mother; it couldn't do no harm."

She shook her head, but looked at him with questioning eyes.

"Suppose it was to please a gentleman as I am more in debt to than I can ever pay—more than I want ever to pay," cried Dick, "except in doing everything to please him as long as I live. You may say it aint me as can do this, and that I'm taking it out of you; but you're all I have to help me, and it aint to save myself. Mother, it's Mr Ross as

has heard somehow how clever you are; and if you would do it just once to please him and me!"

She did not answer for a few minutes. Dick thought she was struggling with herself to overcome her repugnance. Then she replied, with an altered and agitated voice, "For him I'll do it—you can bring him to-morrow."

"How kind you are, mother!" said Dick, gratefully. "College breaks up the day after to-morrow," he added, in a dolorous voice. "I don't know what I shall do without him and all of them—the place won't look the same, nor I shan't feel the same. Mayn't he come to-night? I think he's going off to-morrow up to Scotland, as they're all talking of. Half of 'em goes up to Scotland. I wonder what kind of a place it is. Were we ever there?"

"Once—when you were quite a child."

"'Twas there the tother little chap died?" said Dick, compassionately. "Poor mammy, I didn't mean to vex you. I wonder what he'd have been like now if he'd lived. Look here, mother, mayn't he come to-night?"

"If you like," she said, trying to seem calm, but deeply agitated by this reference. He saw this, and set it down naturally to the melancholy recollections he had evoked.

"Poor mother," he said, rising from his dinner, "you are a feelin' one! all this time, and you've never forgotten. I'll go away and leave you quiet; and just before lock-up, when it's getting dark, him and me will come across. You won't say nothing you can help that's dreadful if the cards turn up bad?—and speak as kind to him as you can, mother dear, he's been so kind to me."

Speak as kind to him as you can! What words were these to be said to her whose whole being was disturbed

and excited by the idea of seeing this stranger ! Keep yourself from falling at his feet and kissing them ; from falling on his neck and weeping over him. If Dick had but known, these were more likely things to happen. She scarcely saw her boy go out, or could distinguish what were the last words he said to her. Her heart was full of the other—the other whose face her hungry eyes had not been able to distinguish from her window, who had never seen her, so far as he knew, and yet who was hers, though she dared not say so, dared not claim any share in him. Dared not ! though she could not have told why. To her there were barriers between them impassable. She had given him up when he was a child for the sake of justice, and the wild natural virtue and honour in her soul stood between her and the child she had relinquished. It seemed to her that in giving him up she had come under a solemn tacit engagement never to make herself known to him, and she was too profoundly agitated now to be able to think. Indeed I do not think that reasonable sober thought, built upon just foundations, was ever possible to her. She could muse and brood, and did so, and had done so, —doing little else for many a silent year ; and she could sit still, mentally, and allow her imagination and mind to be taken possession of by a tumult of fancy and feeling, which drew her now and then to a hasty decision, and which, had she been questioned on the subject, she would have called thinking—as, indeed, it stands for thinking with many of us. It had been this confused working in her of recollection and of a fanciful remorse which had determined her to give up Valentine to his father ; and now that old fever seemed to have come back again, and to boil in her veins. I don't know if she had seriously re-

gretted her decision then, or if she had ever allowed herself to think of it as a thing that could have been helped, or that might still be remedied. But by this time, at least, she had come to feel that it never could be remedied, and that Valentine Ross, Lord Eskside's heir, could never be carried off to the woods and fields as her son, as perhaps a child might have been. He was a gentleman now, she felt, with a forlorn pride, which mingled strangely with the anguish of absolute loss with which she realised the distance between them,—the tremendous and uncrossable gulf between his state and hers. He was her son, yet never could know her, never acknowledge her, —and she was to speak with him that night.

The sun had begun to sink, before, starting up from her long and agitated musing, the womanish idea struck her of making some preparations for his reception, arranging her poor room and her person to make as favourable an impression as possible upon the young prince who was her own child. What was she to do ? She had been a gentleman's wife once, though for so short a time ; and sometimes of late this recollection had come strongly to her mind, with a sensation of curious pride which was new to her. Now she made an effort to recall that strange chapter in her life, when she had lived among beautiful things, and worn beautiful dresses, and might have learned what gentlemen like. She had never seen Val sufficiently near to distinguish his features, and oddly enough, ignoring the likeness of her husband which was in Dick, expected to find in Valentine another Richard, and instinctively concluded that his tastes must be what his father's were. After a short pause of consideration she went to a trunk,



which she had lately sent for to the vagrant headquarters, where it had been kept for her for years—a trunk containing some relics of that departed life in which she had been “a lady.” Out of this she took a little shawl embroidered in silken garlands, and which had faded into colours even more tasteful and sweet than they were in their newest glories—a shawl for which Mr Grinder, or any other *dilettante* in Eton, would have given her almost anything she liked to ask. This she threw over a rough table of Dick’s making, and placed on it some flowers in a homely little vase of coarse material yet graceful shape. Here, too, she placed a book or two drawn from the same repository of treasures—books in rich faded binding, chiefly poetry, which Richard had given her in his early folly. The small table with its rich cover, its bright flowers and gilded books, looked like a little altar of fancy and grace in the bare room; it was indeed an altar dedicated to the memory of the past, to the pleasure of the unknown.

When she had arranged this touching and simple piece of incongruity, she proceeded to dress herself. She took off her printed gown and put on a black one, which also came out of her trunk. She put aside the printed handkerchief which she usually wore, tramp fashion, on her head, and brushed out her long beautiful black hair, in which there was not one white thread. Why should there have been? She was not more than thirty-five or thirty-six, though she looked older. She twisted her hair in great coils round her head—a kind of coiffure which I think the poor creature remembered Richard had liked. Her appearance was strangely changed when she had made this simple toilet. She looked like some wild half-savage princess condemned

to exile and penury, deprived of her retinue and familiar pomp, but not of her natural dignity. The form of her fine head, the turn of her graceful shoulders, had not been visible in her tramp dress. When she had done everything she could think of to perfect the effect which she prepared, poor soul, so carefully, she sat down, with what calm she could muster, to wait for her boys. Her boys, her children, the two who had come into the world at one birth, had lain in her arms together, but who now were as unconscious of the relationship, and as far divided, as if worlds had lain between them! Indeed she was quite calm and still to outward appearance, having acquired that power of perfect external self-restraint which many passionate natures possess, though her heart beat loud in her head and ears, performing a whole muffled orchestra of wild music. Had any stranger spoken to her she would not have heard; had any one come in, except the two she was expecting, I do not think she would have seen them, she was so utterly absorbed in one thought.

At last she heard the sound of their steps coming up-stairs. The light had begun to wane in the west, and a purple tone of half darkness had come into the golden air of the evening. She stood up mechanically, not knowing what she was doing, and the next moment two figures stood before her—one well known, her familiar boy,—the other! Was this the other? A strange sensation, half of pleasure, half of disappointment, shot through her at sight of his face.

Val had come in carelessly enough, taking off his hat, but with the ease of a superior. He stopped short, however, when he saw the altogether unexpected appearance of the woman who was Dick’s mother. He felt a curious thrill come into his veins

—of surprise, he thought. "I beg your pardon," he said ; "I—hope you don't mind my coming? Brown said you wouldn't mind."

"You are very welcome, sir," she said, her voice trembling in spite of her. "If there is anything I can do for you. You have been so kind—to my boy."

"Oh," said Val, embarrassed, with a shy laugh, "it pays to be kind to Brown. He's done us credit. I say—what a nice place you've got here!"

He was looking almost with consternation at the beautiful embroidery and the books. Where could they have picked up such things? He was half impressed and half alarmed, he could not have told why. He put out a furtive hand and clutched at Dick's arm. "I say, do you think she minds?" Val had never been so shy in his life.

"You want me to tell you your fortune, sir?" she said, recovering a little. "I don't hold with it; but I'll do it if you wish it. I'll do it—once—and for you."

"Oh, thanks, awfully," cried Val, more and more taken aback—"if you're sure you don't mind:" and he held out his hand with a certain timidity most unusual to him. She took it suddenly in both hers by an uncontrollable movement, held it fast, gazed at it earnestly, and bent down her head, as if she would have kissed it. Val felt her hands tremble, and her agitation was so evident that both the boys were moved to unutterable wonder; somehow, I think, the one of them who wondered least was Valentine, upon whom this trembling eager grasp made the strongest impression. He felt as if the tears were coming to his eyes, but could not tell why.

"It is not the hand I thought to see," she said, as if speaking to herself—"not the hand I thought." Then dropping it suddenly, with an

air of bewilderment, she said, hastily, "It is not by the hand I do it, but by the cards."

"I ought to have crossed my hand with silver, shouldn't I?" said Val, trying to laugh; but he was excited too.

"No, no," she said, tremulously; "no, no—my boy's mother can take none of your silver. Are you as fond of him as he is fond of you?"

"Mother!" cried Dick, amazed at the presumption of this inquiry.

"Well—fond?" said Val, doubtfully; "yes, really I think I am, after all, though I'm sure I don't know why. He should have been a gentleman. Mrs Brown, I am afraid it is getting near lock-up."

"My name is not Mrs Brown," she said, quickly.

"Oh, isn't it? I beg your pardon," said Val. "I thought as he was Brown—Mrs —?"

"There's no Miss nor Missis among my folks. They call me Myra—Forest Myra," she said, hastily. "Dick, give me the cards, and I will do my best."

But Dick was sadly distressed to see that his mother was not doing her best. She turned the cards about, and murmured some of the usual jargon about fair men and dark women, and news to receive, and journeys to go. But she was not herself: either the fortune was so very bad that she was afraid to reveal it, or else something strange must have happened to her. She threw them down at last impatiently, and fixed her intent eyes upon Valentine's face.

"If you have all the good I wish you, you'll be happy indeed," she said; "but I can't do nothing to-night. Sometimes the power leaves us." Then she put her hand lightly on his shoulder, and gazed at him beseechingly. "Will you come again?" she said.

"Oh yes," said Val, relieved.



He drew a step back, with a sense of having escaped. "I don't really mind, you know, at all," he said ; "it was nothing but a joke. But I'll come again with pleasure. I say, what have you done to that carving, Brown?"

How glad Val was to get away from her touch, and from her intent eyes ! and yet he did not want to go away. He hastened to the other end of the room with Dick, who was glad also to find that the perplexing interview was at an end, and got out his bit of carving with great relief. Val stood for a long time (as they all thought) side by side with the other, laying their heads together, the light locks and the dark—talking both together, as boys do ; and felt himself calm down, but with a sense that something strange had happened to him, something more than he could understand. The mother sat down on her chair, her limbs no longer able to sustain her. She was glad, too, that it was over—glad and sad, and so shaken with conflicting emotions,

that she scarcely knew what was going on. Her heart sounded in her ears like great waves ; and through a strange mist in her eyes, and the gathering twilight, she saw vaguely, dimly, the two beside her. Oh, if she could but have put her arms round them and kissed them both together ! But she could not. She sat down silent among the shadows, a shadow herself, against the evening light, and saw them in a mist, and held her peace.

"You did not tell me your mother was a lady," said Val, as the two went back together through the soft dusk to the river-side.

"I never knew it," said wondering Dick ; "I never thought it—till to-night."

"Ah, but I am sure of it," said Val. "I thought you couldn't be a cad, Brown, or I should not have taken to you like this. She's a lady, sure enough ; and what's more," he added, with an embarrassed laugh, "I feel as if I had known her somewhere—before—I suppose, before I was born !"

## SEX IN MIND AND EDUCATION : A COMMENTARY.

A MOVEMENT has been set on foot in this country in recent years which deserves every sympathy and encouragement, so far as it is directed towards improving the education of women, widening their interests in life, and of facilitating their admission to careers in which, as women, they may be useful, and in which the modesty of womanhood is not forgotten. But unfortunately, in this, as in all other matters in which there is social or popular movement, the air is poisoned with foolish theories, and fantastic tricks are perpetrated in which moderation and good sense are laughed to scorn. One frantic feminine orator, who is a married woman of some position and a champion of advanced female education, is reported, in the 'Times' of 17th January 1874, thus to have amused and instructed a Sheffield audience. Remarking that women's plea for the suffrage was a plea for their very lives, asking that they might not be wholly annihilated, she proceeded: "The woman slave had arisen and looked her ruler in the face, and from that hour he had been troubled, uneasy, and unsettled on his throne. (Great cheering.) When the working man rose and said, 'I also am a man,' it was the death-knell of the aristocracy of birth. (Cheers.) When the woman said, 'I also am a human being,' it was the death-knell of the aristocracy of sex." (Loud cheers.)

Greater nonsense was never talked upon any platform. If hysterics be, as some women of advanced views tell us, the normal condition of un-

employed young ladies, their admission to new careers, indiscreetly effected, does not appear to provide a remedy. And society apparently has lost one safeguard in the undue decline or timid exercise of marital authority.

But female education, and the principles upon which it is to proceed, are of such infinite importance to society, that their discussion must not be prejudiced in any way by the vagaries of what are called exceptional women. The ladies who have earned that title have, no doubt, succeeded in calling attention to the subject, but they have also succeeded in investing it, by their language and their conduct, with a considerable amount of prejudice, for which, as applied to themselves instead of their cause, we think there is, and we tell them so frankly, a fair foundation. Much of their singular sentiment is due to the influence and writings of the late Mr Mill, whose social theories are destined to live in the affections of exceptional women, long after they have been rejected by the deliberate judgment of the rest of society.

So much has been said recently in the newspapers, and in the 'Fortnightly Review,' upon the subject of sex in mind and education, that we think it right to bring it to the notice of our readers. Its practical importance in America is enormous, for in that country the rage for equality—that spirit which, if we remember right, was recently said at Glasgow to be rising like a moaning wind in Europe—has led to the



identical co-education of the sexes, regardless of their physiological needs and differences, to an extent which (combined with other causes) threatens, according to American physicians of repute and experience, chronic invalidism to women, and speedy degeneracy to the race. Its practical importance in England is at present not nearly so great, for co-education of the sexes, in the sense in which it exists in America, has not yet been tried in this country; and we have that confidence in the good sense of our countrymen and countrywomen that we believe it never will, at least to any appreciable extent. Nevertheless, it has seemed good to the 'Fortnightly' to introduce the discussion of this subject in a manner more remarkable for its fulness than its delicacy. The two medical combatants who have handled it in that journal have treated it in great detail, and with some acrimony. But they have never succeeded in bringing it to an intelligible or practical issue, as we will show further on. One has denounced the American system; the other has defended the English one, which is totally different. Both have discussed the extent to which women are "handicapped" by their physical constitution; and though one is inclined to exaggerate and the other to make light of female disabilities, the arguments of both will justify the English and condemn the American system of higher female education.

Dr Maudsley, who is one of the combatants, has in the April number of the 'Fortnightly' placed before its readers a paper, in which he treats, in a manner which leaves nothing to the imagination, the subject of female organisation, and the demands which its special functions make upon its strength. He has observed no reticence of any sort or kind upon what he calls the physio-

logy of the matter, his intention being "to look the matter honestly in the face." The consequence is, we are treated to a discussion which, however appropriate to the pages of a medical publication, is a novelty in English current literature. And a collateral question of some importance arises, whether the necessity for so much frankness is made out, or whether the writer is not amenable to grave censure for having needlessly introduced an objectionable and disagreeable inquiry? The decision of that question depends upon whether we consider that the topics so obtruded upon our attention are of any immediate practical importance in this country. Considerations of delicacy and decency are usually held to impose some reserve both upon editors and authors, and it is not in the interest of English literature and the English public that any violations of them should pass unnoticed and unchallenged. A reply to Dr Maudsley's article by Mrs Garrett Anderson, M.D., appeared in the May number of the 'Fortnightly.' Fairness compels us to except her paper from the same censure which is justly due to Dr Maudsley; for if women are to be made the subject of discussions of that nature to their disadvantage, real or supposed, they may be expected to reply. They cannot, so they say, be silent, in obedience to considerations which are disregarded by their opponents. After weighing the subjects of practical controversy—both those which are ostensibly treated, and those which are obviously suppressed—it seems to us that the medical discussion, however necessary in America, was premature and unjustifiable here. There being no attempt in this country to introduce the system of early co-education of the sexes, so prevalent in America, and so fiercely denounced by medi-

cal authorities there, the only relevancy of such a discussion to anything which exists here is as regards those who are seeking to enter a medical career, or who may seek degrees at London University, provided its charter be remodelled; or who desire to work in factories untrammelled by the restrictive rules of factory legislation. The objectionable details, however, refer not to grown women, but to growing girls at the educational period of life, rather than at that of operative or professional or even university work. It is not pretended that English girls are likely to fall victims while still children to any senseless system of education existing or suggested. Under these circumstances, much as we may need a warning on the subject of unduly stimulating feminine rivalry and competition, the laws of nature have not yet been openly defied, or even threatened with neglect; and until a writer can demonstrate that they have, he will do well to observe some delicacy. The minute details in which Dr Maudsley has indulged were not merely unnecessary; they are the weakest part of an otherwise powerful article, and have laid him open to the charge of exaggeration, which it would have been prudent to avoid.

As the question in this country is still principally one of theory, the application of which is remotely possible, we will first state the theory and trace its origin, and then refer to America, where it has been reduced to practice. It is well known that the advocates of what are called Women's Rights, as well here as in America, insist upon the equality of the sexes, without limitation. Regardless of the uniform teaching of history in all ages, races, and climates—and regardless, the doctors tell us, of the most elementary rules of physiological science—

they insist upon the equal rights of the sexes, and that unrestricted competition between them should be permitted and fostered. Mr Mill started the doctrine in this country. He declared, in his own confident way, that the nature of woman was eminently artificial, whereas physiologists say it has a scientific and complete explanation. Mr Mill said that that "artificial nature" (*sic*) was the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others; physiologists tell us that that nature is not artificial, that it demands its own special development, and cannot be contradicted or disregarded with impunity. Mr Mill denied that there was any radical inequality between the sexes, and that their general relations in all affairs of life, even in marriage, are those of absolute equality. "Standing on the ground of common-sense and the constitution of the human mind," he denied "that any one knows, or can know, the nature of the two sexes, as long as they have only been seen in their present relations to one another." Physiologists are apparently agreed that there is sex in mind as well as in body, and that the mental qualities of the sexes correlate their physical differences.

Identical co-education of the sexes, unrestricted competition between them, the reduction of marriage to the state of partnership at will, with equal rights and limited liability, follow from Mr Mill's theory; but are alike opposed to the teachings of physiology, religion, common-sense, and experience. He was bitterly opposed to "the Subjection of Women" in any of its forms. It is right to draw attention to the position and surroundings of the authors of the book which is known by that title. They are disclosed to us in his 'Autobiography.'



It was the result of that "partnership of thought, feeling, and writing," which existed between him and Mrs Taylor for twenty years of their lives, and which was succeeded, on the death of Mr Taylor, by the "partnership of their entire existence." The book emanated "from the fund of thought which had been made common to them both, by their innumerable conversations and discussions on a topic which filled so large a place in their minds." We have already in these pages reviewed Mr Mill's account of his career, and endeavoured to do justice to his eminent character and achievements. And therefore we shall the more readily say that his relations to Mrs Taylor during her husband's life were the great blot upon his career; and that the social theories which he elaborated with her, as a weapon of defence against adverse social opinion, are a stain upon his philosophic system. The rights of women were, on Mr Mill's own showing, pushed by them to an extreme which precluded in principle any duties in a wife, and in practice denied to the unfortunate husband even a title to divorce. Such a relationship between them, and such dereliction of duty on the part of one of them to her husband, were defensible only upon theories which are better known than approved. They might have enabled Mr Mill and Mrs Taylor to reconcile their conduct to their consciences. But they cannot be generally accepted without upsetting the relations between the sexes, and overturning the foundations of domestic morality.

With these theories partially afloat in England, attention is drawn to the circumstance that identical co-education of the sexes—which is the first step towards enforced equality—is being tried in America; that the physicians denounce it, and are in their turn assailed by exceptional

women, who in that country as well as this seem to think that anything appertaining to the education of their sex is their own special property, forthwith to take a place in the programme of the rights of women. The subject, however, if allowed to be managed on American principles, will soon become of transcendent importance to the human race. Amongst Americans the subject has become menacing and dangerous to the last degree. The first observation of a European landing amongst them is, that their women are a feeble race; and their physicians emphatically declare that one of the causes, which has been recently aggravated in its intensity, is the educational method adopted in their schools and colleges. "If these causes," they say, "should continue for the next half-century, and increase in the same ratio as they have for the last fifty years, it requires no prophet to foretell that the wives who are to be mothers in our Republic must be drawn from Transatlantic homes. The sons of the New World will have to react, on a magnificent scale, the old story of unwived Rome and the Sabines."

Dr Edward Clarke, a physician of some repute in America, and who was at one time a professor in Harvard College, has published a small book which endeavours to solve the problem of woman's sphere by the aid of physiological science. It is entitled '*Sex in Education*;' and is devoted to prove the obvious truth that the educational capacities of boys and girls correlate the differences in their sex, and that the actual training both of mind and body must do the same. "The cerebral processes," he says, "by which the acquisition of knowledge is made, are the same for each sex; but the mode of life which gives the finest nurture to the brain, and so enables those processes to

yield their best result, is not the same for each sex."

He discusses, as in that country under existing circumstances he was well entitled to do, the whole physiology of the subject, and fills it with earnest and emphatic warnings. He begins by observing that there are three primary divisions of the human frame—viz., the nutritive, nervous, and reproductive systems. The first two are alike in each sex, and the machinery of them is the same. The scientific inference from this is, that intellectual power is capable of equal development in both sexes; and with this verdict in their behalf, women ought to be conciliated in favour of his earnest warnings as to the mode in which that development should be effected. With regard to the reproductive system, the case is altogether different. The educational life of a girl is shown with great minuteness of detail, which it is unnecessary here to follow, to stretch over several very critical years of her life. An extraordinary task calling for rapid expenditure of force, the building up a delicate and extensive mechanism, is said to be imposed upon her by her sex during these critical years; while the organisation of a male grows steadily, gradually, and equally from birth to maturity. And he goes on to show that if that task is not completed at the proper time, it is never perfectly accomplished afterwards, the result being that the foundation is laid of disease and weakness. He enumerates a host of ills which are induced by modes of early life which disregard this task, and by stimulating competition between boys and girls, which the latter are physiologically unfitted to sustain, not so much in the long-run as at the same time, by the same method, and according to the same regimen. He adds, that fortunate is the girls' school or

college that does not furnish abundant examples of these sad cases. He says that the growing period or formative epoch extends from birth to the age of twenty or twenty-five years: its duration is shorter for a girl than for a boy; she ripens quicker than he. In the four years from fourteen to eighteen, he says—though other physicians dispute his statement in its actual and numerical detail—that a girl accomplishes an amount of physiological change and growth which nature does not require of a boy in less than twice that number of years.

Guided by these threefold laws of development, he passes on to the principles which limit and control education. Some are obviously common to both sexes. But supreme attention must be paid to physiological differences, which necessitate different modes of life, and forbid, as a general rule, identity in their training and pursuits. He gives numerous instances of the utter breakdown of American girls under the system of American co-education, which he describes to be, not a mere mode of utilising the same building and the same instructors for the purpose of giving appropriate education to the two sexes, as well as to the different ages of the same sex (which he does not object to); but a system of teaching boys and girls the same things at the same time, in the same place, by the same faculty, with the same methods, and under the same regimen. This he protests against. It is a system which admits age and proficiency, but not sex, as a factor in classification. Such identity of education, with the undue stimulus to competition, is one of the causes, and a most important one, which has led to the admitted degeneracy of American women. Identity of training, he says, is what many in America at



the present day seem to be praying for and working for. But, in his view, "appropriate education of the two sexes, carried as far as possible, is a consummation most devoutly to be desired : identical education of the two sexes is a crime before God and humanity that physiology protests against, and experience weeps over."

"The error," he adds, "which has led to the identical education of the two sexes, and which prophesies their identical co-education in colleges and universities, is not confined to technical education. It permeates society. It is found in the home, the workshop, the factory, and in all the ramifications of social life. The identity of boys and girls, of men and women, is practically asserted out of the school as much as in it, and it is theoretically proclaimed from the pulpit and the rostrum. Woman seems to be looking up to man and his development as the goal and ideal of womanhood. The new gospel of female development glorifies what she possesses in common with him, and tramples under her feet, as a source of weakness and badge of inferiority, the mechanism and functions peculiar to herself. In consequence of this widespread error, largely the result of physiological ignorance, girls are almost universally trained in masculine methods of living and working, as well as of studying. The notion is practically found everywhere, that boys and girls are one, and that the boys make the one."

There are two reasons, however, assigned why female operatives of all sorts are likely to suffer less, and actually do suffer less, from such persistent work than female students—why Jane in the factory can work more steadily with the loom than Jane in college with the dictionary. The first reason is, that the female

operative, of whatever sort, has as a rule passed through the first critical epoch of woman's life—she has got fairly by it. The second reason is, that the former work their brains less. Give girls, he says, a fair chance for physical development at school, and they will be able in after-life, with reasonable care of themselves, to answer the demands that will be made upon them. The gist of his discussion is, that as no education for boys is worthy of the name which does not provide for the development of muscular power and animal vigour, for proficiency in the exercises of the playground and athletic sports—so no education for girls is worthy of the name which does not specially (and in a manner distinct from boys) provide for her physical health and growth. He proves that nature punishes neglect by inflicting upon her serious physical evils and ultimate degeneracy, and the evils are the more serious that they involve in their effects future generations.

In this way a very strong case is made out in theory against the identical education of the sexes, even when carried on separately, though without discrimination between their relative powers ; but when carried on, as it is in America, side by side, the element of emulation is introduced, and the evils are intensified. It is not the competition merely of separately striving for the same ultimate goal. Each sex runs its race side by side on the same road, in daily competition with the other, with equal expenditure of force at all times ; and the inevitable results are such as he describes and deplures in America. The experiment of the identical co-education of the sexes has not been tried long enough to show much more than its first-fruits—viz., its results while the pupils are in college. It is, and is described

to be, "intellectually a success, physically a failure." Two or three generations must come and go before any sufficient idea can be formed of the harvest it will yield. "The physiologist dreads to see the costly experiment tried. The urgent reformer, who cares less for human suffering and human life than for the trial of his theories, will regard the experiment with equanimity, if not with complacency."

Dr Clarke sums up his discussion with the following wise and judicious remarks: "The intimate connection of mind and brain, the correlation of mental power and cerebral metamorphosis, explains and justifies the physiologist's demand that in the education of girls as well as of boys, the machinery and methods of instruction should be carefully adjusted to their organisation. If it were possible, they should be adjusted to the organisation of each individual. None doubt the importance of age, acquirement, idiosyncrasy, and probable career in life, as factors in classification. Sex goes deeper than any or all of these. To neglect this is to neglect the chief factor of the problem."

The subject is a hot one in America, and no wonder; and in England the medical profession introduce its discussion through the pages of the 'Fortnightly.' In order to give it a more comprehensive character than it had under Dr Clarke's handling, it is pointedly divided in that magazine into two branches; and apparently, if we wish to get clear views, it is necessary to keep them quite distinct. The first is—Is there such a thing as sex in mind; and, if so, what mental characteristics correlate the differences in sex? The second is—Ought sex to be recognised, and to what extent, in educational plans and methods, both with respect to mental and

physical training? Both articles suffer from a good deal of obscurity and confusion by not sufficiently maintaining throughout the distinction which they have pointedly drawn. Knowing that the subject is one which fills a large place in the attention of the New World, and is of growing interest in the Old, we were curious to ascertain what light medical science, investigated from two opposite points of view, conducted by members of the medical profession of different sexes, could throw upon the subject. Candour obliges us to confess that the discussion falls short of our expectations, and is, in fact, much ado about nothing. The prudence of two or three sanitary rules is established beyond dispute. But so far as the generic differences of sex in mind are concerned, and the corresponding differences in mental and physical training, we are very much where we were before. We have the satisfaction of discovering that medical authorities are agreed that those differences exist. Dr Maudsley has striven, as far as the existing state of physiology and psychology will allow him, to reduce them within scientific classification, and to trace their origin. The reply is confined to a mere sanitary discussion and the details of a particular system of education, which, admitting the existence of those differences, does not help to classify or describe them. So far as they are contentious, the two articles are more in the nature of rival prescriptions than of contributions to the solution of a scientific problem.

Now, upon the subject of sex in mind, which is the really, perhaps we may say the only, valuable part of Dr Maudsley's paper, his theory, which we are obliged to extract from different parts of his article, where it is confused and embedded with other matter, is



this: He first discusses the bodily organisation of the two sexes. Then he points out that mind is the sum of those functions of the brain commonly known as thought, feeling, and will. The brain is in the closest physiological sympathy with all the organs of the body. It communicates with them by definite paths of nervous communication. There are internuncial nerve-fibres which keep up that communication. There is an intimate consensus of functions, so that the brain habitually feels and declares the influence of the different organs. These organs react upon it, and essentially affect its nature as the organ of mental functions. Each organ possesses its own special influence on the brain, and is an essential constituent of mental life, the influence of the reproductive organs being the strongest, producing at maturity a great mental revolution which is of a widely different character in the two sexes, and is the source of marked mental differences between them.

Having thus explained the existence and origin of sex in mind, he proceeds, confusing his subject again with sex in education, to unfold its distinguishing characteristics. And here, where we might have hoped for some valuable light from an expert writing in a journal of high scientific pretensions, we are to a considerable extent disappointed. He says that regard must be had to the specialties of woman's nature. What are those specialties? First, he says, they are manifestly endowed with qualities of mind which specially fit them to stimulate and foster the first growths of intelligence in children. They have the intimate and special sympathies which a mother has with a child, the mental "qualities which qualify" her specially to be the successful nurse and educator of infants and young children. Further, she has

qualities of mind which adapt her to be the helpmate and companion of man. This is all somewhat vague and indefinite. We have no doubt that it is perfectly true; but a scientific writer who descends upon us from the heights of the medical profession, might have told us something new as well as something true, and given us a better glimpse of a scientific classification of the sexual qualities of mind.

He tells us that the female qualities of mind are not the artificial results of their subjection and dependence. They lie, he adds, deeper than circumstances, being inherent in the fundamental character of sex, and are ineradicable. Women are marked out by nature for different offices in life from men; they have totally different functions, the influence of which pervades and affects essentially their entire being, mental as well as physical. The vital energy which, in a growing boy, may be directed to the growth of muscle and physical strength and brain-power, cannot be unduly diverted in a growing girl from the formation of a physical mechanism, which taxes all the resources of her constitution. She has, moreover, less "energy and power of endurance of the nerve-force which drives the intellectual and muscular machinery." That, again, is a subject upon which we should like to have heard more. Dr Maudsley again and again refers to it, but he does not give a scientific account of it. He tells us in one place that certain important physiological changes which take place may easily produce serious disorders when the nerve-centres are 'more unstable than is natural. When the nerve-centres are in a state of greater irritability, by reason of the development of these reproductive functions, they will be the more easily and the more seriously deranged. And so on.

The result of Dr Maudsley's scientific analysis is, that those who seek to improve the education of women must recognise simply what we all knew before,—that it is impossible to transform a woman into a man; that women cannot have the same aims as men, pursued by the same methods; and that it is injurious to attempt to assimilate the female to the male mind.

The reply to this discussion, which appeared in the next number of the 'Review,' does not contravene this position—viz., the existence of sex in mind—in the slightest degree. Although Dr Maudsley has failed to keep it distinct from the rest of his article, which bears upon the subject of sex in education, and has not dealt with it with such minute completeness as one could have wished, having reserved all his power of detail for quite a subordinate branch of his subject,—it is nevertheless the prominent portion of his paper, and challenged direct contradiction, if such were forthcoming. But the reply is totally silent upon the only scientific portion of the discussion; in respect of which, Dr Maudsley's article is pointedly distinguished from the American treatise. "The single aim," it says, "of those anxious to promote a higher and more serious education for women, is to make the best they can of the materials at their disposal." It does not deny that these materials differ essentially in the two sexes, as Dr Maudsley asserts. But it asks with unfeigned surprise what ground Dr Maudsley can conceive that he has for imputing any wish to change women into men, or to assimilate the female to the male mind. It asserts that no one with the slightest authority, but only an occasional indiscreet advocate, has ever said or implied anything of the sort.

Here, therefore, is a distinct admission on the part of "the reformers," made apparently with the necessary authority and discretion, that there is sex in mind, and that any attempt to assimilate the mind of the one sex to the mind of the other, is an attempt which no one of any authority or discretion would dream of making. And as for the special mental characteristics which distinguish the sexes, Dr Maudsley's enumeration of them is nowhere disputed, or even cavilled at. He has, in truth, limited himself to such as were too obvious to be disputed by any one who admits that there is sex in mind. There are mental qualities, therefore, which correlate the differences of sex, which from the time of Eve to the present day have determined the relation of the sexes. With that point clearly understood, the discussion is at once limited to the question whether there should also be sex in education, which is the sole point to which the reply addresses itself.

When we come to this latter question, it is obvious that it stands upon a totally different footing in this country from that which it occupies in America. Not merely is it admitted that there is sex in mind, but it is also admitted that there is sex in training. Both articles in the 'Fortnightly' agree upon that point also.

Dr Maudsley asserts that woman must have a special sphere of development and activity. Before she is subjected to a system of mental training adapted for men, "it is needful to consider whether this can be done without serious injury to her health and strength." He explicitly admits "the right of woman to the best mental culture." But because there is sex in mind, he denies that woman can be transformed into a man, and denies that



"a system of female education should be laid down on the same lines, follow the same method, and have the same ends in view, as a system of education for men." He insists that a proper physical education of girls must recognise "their peculiar functions and their fore-ordained work as mothers and nurses of children." And a proper mental education requires attention "to those qualities of mind which correlate the physical differences of her sex;" that is, it should recognise the special mental qualities which are closely connected with physical organisation, and are manifestly intended by nature to fit a woman for maternal duties, and "to be the helpmate and companion of man in mental and bodily union."

He objects to the American system of training the sexes in mixed classes, to the stimulus of competition being unduly applied, and to girls disdaining any privilege of sex. Experienced physicians assert that this system works at a cost to girls of their health and strength, which entails lifelong suffering. Stimulated to compete with boys in mental labour, unable to do so in outdoor and physical exercise, they break down not merely on account of their "greater constitutional susceptibility," but because there is "no compensating balance of emulation in other fields of activity." He objects also to the production "of a race of sexless beings who, undistracted and unharassed by the ignoble troubles of reproduction, shall carry on the intellectual work of the world, not otherwise than as the ants do the work and fighting of the community." He points out that the consequences of an imperfectly developed reproductive system are not sexual only, they are also mental.

He protests against men and women having "the same type of

mental development." He admits "that they are entitled to have all the mental culture and all the freedom necessary to the fullest development of their natures." "The aim of female education should manifestly be the perfect development, not of manhood but of womanhood, by the methods most conducive thereto, so that woman may reach as high a grade of development as man, though it be of a different type. A system of education which is framed to fit them to be nothing more than the superintendents of a household and the ornaments of a drawing-room, is one which does not do justice to their nature, and cannot be seriously defended. Assuredly those of them who have not the opportunity of getting married suffer not a little in mind and body from a method of education which tends to develop the emotional at the expense of the intellectual nature, and by their exclusion from appropriate fields of practical activity."

It is quite impossible to state in stronger terms than this the right of women to the highest attainable culture, so long as it is obtained by appropriate training; their right to enter new fields of activity, so long as they are appropriate to the sex. What is "appropriate training," and what are "appropriate fields," are subjects which are omitted from consideration. The article re-echoes the attack of the American doctors upon the training in that country. It denounces the theories of Mr Mill in this, and the arguments of all other "injudicious advocates" who ignore the differences between the sexes. But it is silent upon the details of any educational system reduced to practice in this country.

The essence of the reply, when separated from the polemical expressions with which it is studded and enlivened, is a substantial agree-

ment with the real scope of Dr Maudsley's article, barring some of the medical details, which, as we have before shown, were beside and beyond the subject. It admits that in early womanhood, guardians and teachers are rightly and necessarily in the habit of making allowance for temporary weakness, and of encouraging a certain amount of idleness. Both teachers and parents are said to need warning on the subject; and those warnings are usefully pressed upon their attention in great detail, both with regard to mental and physical exertion. And a circumstantial account is given, which justifies alike the plans of "the reformers" and the advice of Dr Maudsley, of the arrangements made to meet the special requirements of girls, and to secure them their "appropriate" training. And the authoress asks triumphantly, What more can Dr Maudsley want? The work is shown not to come at an age when Dr Clarke and Dr Maudsley think it "likely to be too exciting." And the pressure of competition is shown not to operate unduly; for the prizes are not sufficient to insure it. The amount of mental work involved in reaching the attainments of ordinary young men is certainly not likely to overtax strength, or to be out of due proportion to the rest of the educational system.

The conditions under which English girls work are shown, on many vital points to be those which Dr Clarke and the other American doctors urge as desirable, and to differ essentially from what they denounce. As for the pressure of work at too early an age, it is shown that "the reformers" in England have striven to effect, and have succeeded in effecting, an extension of time given to education; and that here girls are not allowed to begin their higher education till the age at which American girls have completed it.

There is no identical coeducation in England, and there is no organised movement to effect it. What is done here is to set up the same goal, which neither Dr Clarke nor Dr Maudsley disapproves, and "to allow young men and young women to reach it, each in their own way, and without the stimulus of daily rivalry."

Under these circumstances we are tempted to ask, what is the occasion for raising this discussion in England in a tone of manifest hostility in a manner which is unusual and objectionable? The combatants never come to a distinct issue. They are agreed on the subject of sex in mind, sex in physical training, sex in mental training. And when they talk of assimilating the mental training of men and women, one denounces it in one sense—viz., that which prevails in America; and the other defends it in another and totally different sense—viz., that which prevails in England. Both seem to aim at the same results, which Dr Maudsley has expressed in the passage quoted above more fully and completely than is to be found in any passage of Mrs Anderson's paper.

The dispute, therefore, is all in the air, and the necessity for the discussion is not made out. What the combatants, who are introduced in the pages of the 'Fortnightly' as medical experts, really have in their minds is, that Dr Maudsley is thinking of Mr Mill's theories, the efforts of women to obtain access to the medical profession, and the wild talk of some of the feminine orators, of whose utterances we have already given a sample; and not in the slightest degree of the plan of higher feminine education pursued in England, of the details of which, so far as appears from his article, he is totally ignorant. What Mrs Anderson has in her mind is, the



five ladies in Edinburgh who are striving to enter "a new career," the asserted equality of men and women under all circumstances and for all careers, and the restrictions, legal and social, under which, it is said, they, in common with "agricultural labourers" and "negroes," unjustly suffer. These are the real elements of strife. Consequently, the really scientific part of the inquiry soon falls to the ground, and even the practical and sanitary part of it has nothing to do with any system of education practised or attempted in England. It would unduly lengthen this paper to attempt to discuss the subjects which are included within the range of suppressed controversy; which open a variety of considerations, and can readily be determined without the aid of medical science. We are satisfied with the admitted elementary principle, that there is sex in mind, sex in mental and physical training, as well as sex in body; and we can infer for ourselves that there is also sex in rights as well as in duties, which must in either case be "appropriate," but not "identical."

But in this, as well as in all other disputes of a like nature, it must be admitted that the modest dignity of English womanhood receives very scant respect. Let Americans do what they please, why should English ladies be subjected to such a discussion as that which has recently taken place in the 'Fortnightly'? Why should the growing habit be encouraged of classing them, contrary to the dictates of moderation and good sense, with negroes and agricultural labourers? To listen to their medical friends in the 'Fortnightly,' one would think that Englishwomen have only two alternative prospects before them—one, to become sexless beings, whose womanhood has been shattered by mathematics; the other, to suffer

from hysteria brought on by intolerable dulness, unless intercepted by the wear and tear of marriage to the wrong man, before they are physiologically fit for it. We have shown that, in regard to the practical subject of education, there is considerable agreement of opinion, not merely between the writers in the 'Fortnightly,' and in the press, but, as we believe, generally throughout society. It is only when the imagination breaks loose, and people begin to discuss ideal woman as she ought to be, and actual woman as she is fancied to be, that the rein is given to considerable bitterness of feeling, and a good deal of sentimental foolishness on both sides. The tendency on the one side is to describe a being good for nothing but to attend to her physiological "functions;" on the other, to describe the victim of masculine tyranny, determined to assert an equality which, it is considered, the platform and the dissecting room can most readily yield. We must remark that, in dealing with this subject, anything which treats of the relations between the sexes stirs some amount of passion and irritation; and that large deductions must be made from angry advocacy on either side before we can arrive at rational views. Exceptional women have, with singular indiscretion, succeeded in connecting the subject of higher female education with a type of feminine excellence which, in its most aggravated form, does not commend itself to the historic conscience or the æsthetic sentiment of either sex. But the subject is not on that account to be either prejudged or depreciated. A movement to develop the real capacities and worth of true womanhood is one well worthy of national approval and support. While one school of thought inveighs against any system which will turn first-

rate women into third-rate men, the other retorts with something in the nature of a good-humoured *tu quoque* (and a *tu quoque* ought to be good-humoured, for it has nothing else to recommend it), that the masculine type of excellence does not include all that can be desired in humanity. It is deeply to be regretted that women who are taking an active part in a social movement of considerable importance, should not be content to show that they desire the elevation of womanhood, not merely as an end in itself, but also because of its inestimable advantages (collateral if you will) to men and to children. There is too much disposition to adopt the attitude of leaders of "a strike;" too much the spirit of setting sex against sex; too eager a desire to show that the "spheres" of the two sexes are "identical" and not merely "appropriate." And if it would not emasculate the female sex too much, we would suggest that they would have much more chance of attaining medical diplomas, if instead of asserting identical claims with men, to study in the same dissecting and lecture rooms, and an identical right to practise, they would limit themselves to claiming women and children as their appropriate patients. We should suggest that they should recognise in practice, as it appears that they do in theory, that there is sex in mind as well as sex in education; that they should give up the equality or identity theory, both as regards aims, *status*, and rights, and substitute the theory of appropriateness; that they should eschew the late John Stuart Mill and some of his works, including the 'Subjection of Women;' and that they should have in view as the ultimate aim of female development, not merely the success of a vulgar self-assertion,

but improved relations to man and his descendants.

But on every ground of justice and expediency, we protest against the question of admission of women to the medical profession, which is of limited interest, being fought out over the subject of female education, which is of universal interest. Let the medical profession fight it in the newspapers, in the medical universities, in Parliament, and in society: the question of education, either of young children or of early womanhood, is a battlefield which they have no right to select. The tendency of such a discussion as that in the 'Fortnightly' is simply to invest with a party and acrimonious feeling a subject which it is highly desirable should be entirely free from it. The actual result of it is simply to enforce, by consent of the combatants, two very obvious precautions, which may be thus enumerated: First, that girls, at least before eighteen, should be protected from mental strain, the stimulus of undue competition, and from the requirements of their physical nature being overlooked in the desire for mental development; second, that a school system for girls requires to be more carefully guarded in these respects than one for boys, partly because they themselves physically require more care and attention, and partly because intellectual competition in their case has fewer distractions. The total outcome for all practical purposes of this wonderful discussion may be compressed into those two very obvious precautionary maxims, which are enforced, as it seems to us, with quite unnecessary detail. And as for the standard of excellence which each sex may attain, each may fix it for itself. If girls, in the opinion of their teachers, can reach the same standard as boys (no very wonderful achievement if they can), we understand that both



authorities will sanction their doing so, provided, as both insist, they reach it each in their own way, by paths appropriate to each, without the stimulus of daily rivalry.

And as regards the working of undue competition, no sensible people can wish to see that principle fostered and extended. In the tumult of the present day, life seems to be reduced to a mere daily routine of a doing and a getting. The late Mr Mill raised his warning voice against it, and declared that mankind should pay more attention to the cultivation of their natures and human faculties, and devote to the mere money-getting part of their lives "fewer hours in the day, fewer days in the week, fewer weeks in the year, and fewer years of life." The dignity of masculine life is often lost in its feverish competitions and restless acquisitions. And if the life of women is to be forcibly degraded to the same level, where are we to seek the influences which are to refine and mitigate the bustling tumult which characterises modern civilisation? We are not yet, with all our progress, advanced far enough to dispense with the civilising influences of women. And we learn with great satisfaction that there is no intention of introducing into this country the American system of their education. There is no necessity for embarking in a scheme which is chiefly directed to develop in woman

the special and unlovely qualities which fit her to take a keen and engrossing interest in the mere conflicts of life. It is forcibly argued that her physical degeneracy and that of her offspring result; and it certainly tends to lower those refining and elevating influences which society cannot afford to lose, and which women hold in trust for both sexes at all ages. As Dr Maudsley's article, in its essential teaching, has, as we have shown, received the stamp of general consent and approval, we may conclude with quoting the principle which he has forcibly and eloquently expressed, and which it is impossible to gainsay: "Each sex must develop after its kind; and if education in its fundamental meaning be the external cause to which evolution is the internal answer;—if it be the drawing out of the internal qualities of the individual into their highest perfection, by the influence of the most fitting external conditions,—there must be a difference in the *method* of education, answering to differences in their physical and mental natures." This is all that Dr Maudsley contends for, and all that is in any way established by the discussion. It is and has been generally conceded; and we hope that any further elucidation of it will be free from the objectionable details which are fit only for a medical publication.

## NEW BOOKS: VICTOR HUGO'S QUATRE-VINGT-TREIZE.

THE name of M. Victor Hugo is one of the very few which attract universal attention in the world of literature. His great genius and his long life, his command, almost unrivalled, of the springs of human emotion, and even the wildness and eccentricity which accompany his powers, unite to excite the curiosity at least of all readers to every work that bears his name. The greatest of these works are of almost colossal pretensions, and dwarf everything that can be put by their side; we know scarcely anything in modern literature which would not look pale in presence of 'Notre Dame' and 'Les Misérables.' The very extravagance which mingles with the real greatness of these books, gives to them a wild magnificence of outline which captivates the imagination, even when it offends that strait-laced and not always infallible quality which we call good taste. His rules of work are not as those of lesser men; he does not introduce us into a circle of animated figures, and allow us to share their life and thoughts for as long a time as suffices to elucidate their story, which is the manner of most successful writers of fiction. On the contrary, the spectator is put outside the scene, and can do nothing but look on breathless, while amid mist and cloud, with illuminations fiery or genial, as the case may be, the great picture rises before him, each actor detached and separate, some in boldest relief, with a force which is often tremendous, and always forcibly dramatic. We see the personages of his story all round, not softening off into any background, or confused

by any secondary circumstances, but distinct, complete, as if cast in bronze—which does not prevent them from exhibiting now and then the most delicate shades of tenderness, and which in no way interferes with this author's power of representing children—one of his greatest gifts. The babes are as distinct as the heroes, every pearly curve of them tender and sweet as rose-leaves, yet complete creatures, nowhere blurred or indefinite, even in the most delicious softness of execution. The only work which we can recall which exhibits a mode of treatment similar to that of Hugo, is Carlyle's 'French Revolution;' but the philosopher is scornful of his puppets, and throws a certain tragic gleam of ridicule across even that lurid background of despair and suffering; whereas Hugo is always deadly serious, and even by chance may stray as near the limits of the ridiculous as is given to mortal man, with a sublime unconsciousness of that dangerous vicinity. The Frenchman, we may add, is left alone in his greatness without any contemporaries. In his own country there is no one who can be so much as thought of in any possible aspect of rivalry. George Sand, though still now and then at far intervals putting forth some pale flower of old age, cannot certainly now enter into anything like competition with an old man whose works have all the vigour of manhood still; and of the younger crop of writers whom the Empire has trained, there is not one fit to tie the shoes of either of these writers. Neither is there any one on our own side of the Channel who



can with any show of justice be placed by Hugo's side : his genius is too national, his workmanship too characteristic, to be contrasted with the calmer inspiration of any Englishman ; and even on other grounds we know no Englishman except George Eliot (may the bull be forgiven us ! ) who could fairly stand a comparison with him. We do not think, indeed, there is any man living in whose productions the reader can see and feel the poetic passion of composition, of which we have all heard, as he can in the works of Hugo : not that weak frenzy which produces washy floods of fine writing, but the nervous thrill of a force restrained and managed with all the skill of a master, but yet carrying on the strain in spontaneous fire and fullness beyond the reach of mere art. His subject, the character he is unfolding, possesses the writer : he throws himself upon it with a glow and fervour of knowledge, with a certainty of delineation, which is not the mere exercise of practised powers, but that with something indescribable, something indefinable, added to it, swelling in every line, and transforming every paragraph. The workmanship is often wonderful ; but it is not the workmanship which strikes us most—it is the abundant, often wild, sometimes unguided and undisciplined touch of genius which inspires and expands, and exaggerates and dilates the words it is constrained to make use of—almost forcing a new meaning upon them by way of fiery compulsion, to blazon its own meaning upon brain and sense whether they will or not. We know no literary work of the age—we had almost said no intellectual work of any kind—so possessed and quivering with this undescribable but extraordinary power.

We cannot tell whether it is

the cause or the consequence of this singular fulness and intensity of genius which determines M. Hugo's choice of subjects. Through all his work there is one consistent purpose or scope of mind, veiled in fantastic and gigantic plans, such as writers continually frame, and genius continually scorns and laughs at. 'Notre Dame,' 'Les Misérables,' and the 'Travailleurs de la Mer,' have all been put forth, if we remember rightly, as different portions of a great epic of humanity which sooner or later the author means to complete. Another plan of the same prodigious epical character he attaches to the present work, which is, like the others, a fragment in some colossal design. Such vastness of intention is natural to the man ; but there is one real and persistent principle of Art throughout, upon which, consciously or unconsciously, he always works. That everlasting struggle between mankind and fate, which was the great subject of the Greek drama, is the central idea of all Victor Hugo has ever done—except, indeed, that the less rigid imagination of the modern has widened the ground for him, and made, instead of one dread destiny, a dumb and terrible band of mysterious forces, which surround flesh and blood on every side, and which it has to face, one way or another, whenever it passes the narrowest limit of life. This is his theory, apparently, of existence. He shows us plentifully how many things there are in the world which are created only to be subdued, and affords us a vision, fantastically flattering rather than humiliating to human pride, of the manifold achievements and abilities of man. It is his delight, indeed, to endow his hero with superhuman, nay, melodramatic ingenuity, perseverance, power, skill, and strength, and to lead us on

with him from victory to victory, showing the triumph of intelligence and thought over all conflicting influences. But when he has done all this, there comes a moment which arrests the progress of the prodigy. A turn of the poet's hand, and his hero stands face to face with something blind, dumb, unreasoning, and terrible, which he cannot overcome, nor any one for him. In 'Notre Dame' this final force is, as in Greek tragedy, Fate, the great and unappeasable enemy of mankind; in 'Les Misérables' it is the Law, august but remorseless, which can take nothing into consideration, nor pause to weigh extenuating circumstances, or to take note of the temptations and repentances of the man it judges; in the 'Travailleurs de la Mer' it is Nature which is the antagonist—nature, great and terrible, but less invincible than the others. In every case the victim succumbs to this terrible opponent—though in the last, with very delicate and subtle art, the author gives his hero the victory over the sea and all its terrors, and finds in Nature of another kind, in the aversion of a trifling girl, the force that is necessary to destroy him—a force as blind, as unreasoning, as remorseless, as fate or law, as absolute as Atropos, and as cruel.

This is the leading action in each one of the great prose dramas with which M. Hugo has charmed his age—a painful centre, yet one which fascinates as much as it appals the reader, who, indeed, unless he is all the happier, has found himself, also in his day, baffled by circumstances, by what we call chance, by agencies in face of which all his human protestations, reasonings, and entreaties, have been vain and useless. The situation is too familiar to us not to call forth our interest and sympathies; and there is something in the very inertness and passive inexorable character of

the Power thus represented, a force possessing no personality nor feeling, which impresses the imagination as perhaps nothing else can do. The very name of M. Hugo's new work at once presupposes the renewal in its pages of this tragic struggle, which has never had so extraordinary an impersonation and realisation in modern life as in the history of France in its last agitated and stormy period, beginning with the year which gives a name to this work. In this case, we need scarcely explain, the giant in whose grasp all the human creatures of the story struggle, whose dead force they resist with all the passionate force of their individual humanity, and which crushes them at the last, inevitably and remorselessly—is the monster Revolution; a ghost they have themselves raised, something more blind than Fate, more appalling than Nature,—a power which, like fire or flood, it is easy to excite and unloose, but impossible to arrest or bind.

Perhaps it is necessary to be a Frenchman in order to feel the full force of that logic which forms events as well as syllogisms, and which one absolute nation in the world is continually following, to her own dire tribulation and heavy cost. To ourselves inconsistency is no effort—it is natural to us as the air we breathe; it is the first of individual rights and of national qualities. Our philosophers may be logical if they will; we grant them the privilege with a certain contempt; but no necessity of nature compels us to be guided by any remorseless law of reason; and, indeed, the very fact that a thing is inevitable seems to stir nature on this side of the Channel into such a lively natural opposition as often works a remedy to the painful sequence of events, and breaks the inexorable chain. This, however, though congenial to us, is not congenial to the



characteristic national mind of our nearest neighbours. Were it not for the curious disposition which makes us eager to derive personal honour and glory in the contrast from every peculiarity of our fellows, it might be sufficiently interesting to note the special features of this mind without that determination to find it condemnable which influences us all so entirely. Indeed, for our own part we should be very glad to be permitted to discuss the marvellous genius of the author before us, with full recognition of its extraordinary nationality and truth to the French ideal, without being supposed to imply any sense, or feeling any intention of scorn. We all have what our neighbours, with admirable discrimination, call the *défauts de nos qualités*; and if the Frenchman pays what we think a very heavy price for the national gift of lucidity and preciseness, for his power of subtle definition, and for the keen acuteness of his perceptions, we, too, have penalties to pay for the happy inconsistency which is natural to us, and for our perpetual refusal to follow out any principle further than we choose to follow it. Logic is good in a thousand ways, though it is at once pitiful and terrible to be led blindfold by it, and gauge everything in earth and heaven by its rules. We miss its happier uses throughout our lives, if we are lucky enough to miss the sternness of its rigid conclusions in fact and action. Our diffusive inexactitude, our complacent unreasonableness, are equally natural to us as are the Frenchman's concise and correct discrimination, his clear view of what every course of thought may lead him to, and characteristic determination to accept whatever he is convinced of. We whose strongest determination is never to accept a conclusion which displeases us, have the best of it in one way, and he in another; but this is a thing which

neither Frenchmen nor Englishmen are willing to admit. Therefore, when we say that Victor Hugo in this special point is emphatically French, we are conscious of saying what most readers will accept as the worst that can be said; although in our intention it means no such thing, but is a simply intellectual distinction, deeply interesting as such—in some points admirable, in some deplorable, as almost all great national qualities are. Victor Hugo is French to the very depths and heights, French in every nuance of his genius, French to his finger-tips; and like all his nation, he has accepted the extraordinary event which has dominated the history of his country for three-quarters of a century as something more than an event. The Revolution is to him a living force, a great irresponsible remorseless principle, on a level with the others which he has set himself to illustrate—real as law itself, mighty as nature, a principle which men indeed have created and set in motion, but which they must be content to follow, now that it exists, and which no power in France (or on earth, which means about the same thing) can hope to resist. Whosoever resists must calculate upon being crushed to powder; whosoever puts himself into opposition with it has begun a death conflict, with no alternative possible but to destroy or be destroyed. Thus a prophet of the Republic, an apostle of the Commune, exerts his great gifts to impress upon us the same doctrine which every Legitimist of the Faubourg, every noble of old France, and even nowadays every partisan of the fallen Empire, have tried their best to convince us of—that the Revolution is no mere outburst of excitement stimulated by oppression, no single upheaving of an injured people, no one fact terrible and monstrous, but a Force, a Power, an enormous devilish Fran-

kenstein, which must either kill or be killed, and which hitherto has proved itself too much for any antagonist who has measured himself against it. Henri Cinq thinks so, and means to give no quarter if ever his day comes; and Victor Hugo thinks so, and asks none, displaying, to us, on the contrary, its own very emissaries in conflict with this great giant, and swept out of the world by it more remorselessly than their enemies could sweep them. This is not a view of the subject which gives us any pleasure, and the English reader will probably skip a great deal that is said about the Revolution, and confine his interest, if he has any to spare from the personages of the stern and brief drama, to the personal sketches with which the author illustrates his disquisitions; but at the same time this aspect of the question, so strenuously held by the entire nation most involved, is certainly worth a moment's attention, and in its curious mixture of prejudice, panic, self-importance, matter-of-fact, and imagination, is one of the strangest mental impressions which are to be found in history. There is much imagination involved, for France has given shape and form, almost personality and conscious action, to the great embodied whirlwind which has devastated her; there is a grand kind of national vanity too, for it pleases the country, even in its terror and suffering, to believe that this vast Red Shadow, which it hates and fears, is something more terrible, more appalling, more real, than the giant of any other national story. M. Hugo has given the fullest expression to the sentiment of his countrymen. He, too, contemplates the Revolution not as a single fact of the past, but as a thing—a great blind reasonless potency, crushing everything it encounters—a Juggernaut of irresistible power and strength. He gazes on its progress with awe, which is

full of admiration and wonder. Its partisans are its slaves, dominated by its power; and its enemies are inspired and made heroic by that impassioned hate of it which no man can feel for a mere abstraction. Even the author himself struggles as if under the oppression of some great power, when he speaks of and describes that '93 of terrible memory, with which no man can trifle. One figure alone of all that have been standing against this lurid background escapes being swept into annihilation by it; and the one who escapes is its enemy, who recognises its power and is on his defence—not the vassals who obey the terrific abstraction, the Fury which has assumed this name. We may take it upon ourselves to say that it is a national weakness, madness, hysterical exaggeration, that has given this unearthly prominence and power to a set of principles, and created this diabolical angel which overawes and dominates it; and so perhaps it may be; but the fact of this impersonation, creation, embodiment, is of itself the most curious phenomenon, strange to see, and almost impossible to conceive. It has, we are convinced, affected France as nothing else could affect her—at once exciting, terrifying, and maddening her spirit, as is the usual result with men who feel themselves to be fighting with ghosts. M. Hugo's book may urge some of us to realise this, perhaps; but, at all events, whether it does or not, it is the most powerful picture of a very real and genuine mental effort which any artist has up to this time been able to draw.

Nothing can be more simple than the materials out of which the story is woven. A battalion of republican soldiers—Parisians—find in a wood a miserable woman with three babies, a victim of the Revolution, whose husband has been killed, her house burned, her very village



with all her belongings destroyed, by the conflict of the Vendée. The battalion adopts by acclamation the three poor children whom the Revolution has made fatherless; and these infants, though they appear only in this brief prologue, and in one most touching and beautiful after-scene, become at once the pivot upon which the machinery of the tale, such as it is, turns. They stand in the place of the ordinary love-tale, without which, in the general understanding, no work of fiction is complete, embodying all the softer interest, all the repose and tenderness, of which the brief stern history is capable. From the first chapter in the first volume to the beginning of the third, we see nothing of these innocent hostages of civil war; and we do not at this moment recall any scene in fiction which could serve as a parallel to the singular and touching manner of their reappearance, or the curious hush it makes in the fiery tale—the strange, soft, melodious pause in the blazing and commotion of war and hatred, which permits us to see how the innocents sport and slumber on the edge of destruction. Nothing but sheer genius, too certain of its power to hesitate or falter—genius of the most daring description, accompanied by the most exquisite skill and knowledge—could have ventured to trust to this as all the relief of the sombre tale; but the result justifies the daring. The feeling and tenderness of this little episode is beyond praise. It is the purest poetry in its absolute simplicity—a picture at once so lovely and so true, so tragically and pathetically trivial, so heart-rending in its playfulness, that it seems to us for the moment, while still under its immediate effect, to stand alone in modern art. The golden-haired baby in ‘*Silas Marner*’ may be as beautiful, but there are no such elements of pity and terror

involved. Little Georgette, twenty months old, stands in the place of the conventional heroine. Her pretty babble fills up the little room that might have been left for love, had it consisted with the author's purpose to interweave that supposed necessity of romance in his story. But he has not done so. It was not a time for love or love-making. There is no heroine but Georgette—no sentiment beyond that half adoration and entire comprehension of infancy, which M. Hugo has manifested before now; but it would be difficult to imagine anything more exquisite than the sudden pause he makes when, amid the horrors of a siege, he stops to disclose to us the busy nothings, the foolish interests, the play and mischief and babble of the three children, with flames and destruction underneath them, and nothing but cruelty and war around.

The real business of the story opens with the voyage of a certain English corvette, called the *Claymore*, manned by a crew of French Royalists, and especially charged to convey to the Breton coast an old man in the disguise of a peasant, who is the Marquis de Lantenac, a Royalist general, on his way to take the command of the insurrection in La Vendée. Already these seas, between Jersey and Granville, have afforded occasion for M. Hugo's energetic Muse; and again a new conflict, as wonderful almost as that which the shipwrecked sailor maintained with the ghastly *pieuvre*, the Octopus whom M. Hugo and Mr Campbell of Islay between them have invented, or brought back at least into the knowledge of man,—brings a new incident within the range of fiction. Whether it is a likely accident we will not inquire—but at all events it is a possible one, which is all that is necessary; and it is curious not only as a very novel fancy, but at the same

time as a concentration and embodiment in little of M. Hugo's favourite subject—the struggle of human will and intelligence with blind force and destructive power, unguided by reason or will, capable of destroying, but of nothing else. The story of the cannon broken loose, its wild pranks, leaps, and shocks, the consternation of the crew and danger of the vessel, the way in which all look hopelessly on at the dumb thing which kills whoever it touches, and is more fatal than any willing and voluntary enemy, is fantastic enough to give occasion for any amount of criticism. The situation is exactly such a one as delights the author. The leaps and bumps and convulsions of the great gun, those movements which look as if it meant the wild mischief it was doing, as if by moments it paused to ponder, and held back to give a fiercer shock, have a certain truth in them which no one will refuse to acknowledge who has ever seen the blind pitchings and rollings of any dangerous mass of matter, taking from its motion a savage look of conscious life—but they are fantastic enough to disgust the commonplace imagination, and to overpass the boundary between the sublime and the ridiculous, even to more indulgent readers. M. Hugo flings himself upon this incident with a wild delight, and makes the very most of it; for what is it but a parable of his own theory, an abridgment of the aspect which life itself bears in his eyes? The gunner fighting with his cannon for the mastery is a complete impersonation of his favourite hero fighting with circumstances, with fate, with nature. It is the struggle over again, in little, of Jean Valjean, of Gilliatt, and of the poor butterfly victim Esmeralda—only more hopeful, more manageable, in so far as that the man can at least see, and by quick human calculation outwit, the stupid but terrible

opponent who is pitted against him. The following most curious, wild, and fanciful but powerful picture, may be accepted as an epitome of the author's leading thought. The gunner who was to blame for the accident has just appeared on the stage, desperate, to remedy his fault if that is possible.

"And now the strangest scene commenced—a titanic spectacle; the combat of the gun against the gunner; the struggle of dead matter with intelligence; the duel of the man and the thing.

"The man placed himself in a corner, his bar and rope in his hands, his back against a beam; standing rigid with limbs like pillars of steel, livid, calm, tragical, as if rooted to the floor, he waited.

"He waited till the gun should pass by him.

"The gunner knew his piece; and it seemed to him that it also must know him. He had lived so long with it! How often had his hand been buried in its jaws. It was his familiar monster. He began to talk to it as to a dog. 'Come!' he said; perhaps he had an affection for it; he seemed to wish to attract it to him.

"But to draw it to him was to draw it upon him; and in that case he was lost. How to avoid this crushing destruction: that was the question. The spectators looked on terrified; not a bosom breathed freely except that of the old man, who was alone between decks with the two combatants, a sinister witness of all that was going on. He himself might be crushed by the movements of the gun. He did not budge.

"Under them all, the sea blindly directed the struggle.

"At the moment when accepting this appalling encounter, the gunner challenged the cannon, the motion of the waves had a chance intermission, and the gun remained for a second motionless, and as if stupefied. 'Come then!' cried the man; it seemed to listen.

"All at once it sprang upon him; he avoided the shock; the struggle began—an unheard-of struggle; the fragile pitted itself against the invulnerable; on one side force, on the other a soul. All this passed in a kind of



twilight; it was like the indistinct vision of a miracle.

"A soul; but, stranger still, one would have said that the gun too had a soul—a soul of hate and rage. Its blindness seems to have eyes; the monster had the appearance of watching the man. There was, or so at least one was forced to believe, cunning in that mass. It also chose its moment. It was like some incredible gigantic iron insect, endowed, or seeming to be endowed, with the free will of a demon. Sometimes this colossal grasshopper struck the low roof of the battery, then falling back upon its four wheels like a tiger on its claws, resumed its pursuit of the man. He, supple, agile, alert, twisted himself like a snake free of all those thunderous assaults. He avoided each shock; but the blows which he escaped fell on the ship, and the destruction went on. . . .

"Such a strife could not long continue. The gun seemed to say to itself all at once—'Come, come; we must make an end of this,' and it paused. The conclusion approached. The cannon, as if in doubt, seemed to have, or had—for to all the lookers-on it was a being—a moment of ferocious deliberation. Suddenly it precipitated itself on its antagonist. The gunner drew back close to the wall, avoided it as it passed and called to it, laughing, 'Again!' The gun, furious, crushed the larboard carronade, then, caught fast by the invisible bond which held it, threw itself to starboard upon the man, who again escaped. The carronade gave way before its rush; then, as if blind, losing count of what it did, it turned its back on the man, rolled from the back to the front, displaced the stem, and rushed against the bulwark, making a breach in the side of the ship."

The very form of these brief emphatic sentences will seem to many minds the highest artificialism and straining after effect. And indeed it is effect that is sought, and, we think, attained, though not in the self-restrained and hidden way which we consider good taste and good style in English; the narrative altogether could have been written only in French. To deny that it is as fan-

tastic as the tossing and plunging of a nightmare is impossible; but to say that in this wild combat there is not the most striking poetic representation of the terrible dramas which happen sometimes before our very eyes, and which, if not as dramatic as the gun broken loose, yet carry in them, to the dullest imagination, a horrible suggestion of some malevolent will in matter which takes pleasure in crushing and maiming the humanity which is its master—no one can refuse to see. The great rolling mass, which seems to pause "in ferocious deliberation" before it plunges upon its victim, is as true to the mingled effect produced by fact and imagination upon the eyes and mind that look on at almost anything that is called "accident," as it is possible to conceive. We quote the description, however, less for its truth than because it is the most wonderfully characteristic specimen of the author. All his soul and all his individualities are in it; it is his favourite conception compressed into a small space—the concentrated essence of almost everything he has ever produced. The end of the conflict is melodramatic in the highest degree, and carries the imagination in spite of itself to the *Porte Saint Martin* rather than to the regions of loftier art.

"The old man looked at the gunner. 'Approach,' he said.

"The gunner made a step forward. The old man turned to the Count de Boisberthelot, detached the captain's cross of Saint Louis, and fastened it to the woollen shirt of the gunner.

"'Hurrah!' cried the sailors: the marines presented arms. And the old passenger, pointing with his finger to the dazzled gunner, added, 'Now let this man be shot.'

"Stupor succeeded to acclamation."

The sudden and truly stupefying effect here produced is, we are afraid, scarcely within the limits of true

art. A certain excuse is given for it in the after incidents of the tale, and in the principle by which this mysterious judge immediately explains his sentence. "No fault is reparable," he says; "courage ought to be rewarded; negligence must be punished." This principle runs through the book, and brings about its catastrophe—the principle that no goodness or greatness that can follow diminishes the guilt of one evil done; that neither heroism nor lofty character, nor any of those circumstances which incline ordinary humanity to pardon and absolve, can be or ought to be taken into account when Society has a grievance against an individual. It is thus, in some degree, the inspiration of the book, therefore we cannot pass it over with mere condemnation of its emotional character and melodramatic exaggeration, as if it were a separate and detached incident—which is not at all the meaning of the author. To show how this principle is worked into the very fabric of this great romance, might lead us into a more elaborate criticism than suits our time or purpose; but the reader will see enough to judge for himself as the story goes on—sombre, brilliant, grandiose—to a conclusion as melodramatic, perhaps, and still more painful, but entirely in unity with all that has preceded it, and true to the effect which M. Hugo has set all his faculties to produce.

The book is occupied by three figures:—the mysterious disguised personage of the scene we have quoted, the Marquis de Lantenac, general of the Vendean forces, implacable and rigid Royalist, grand seigneur, a man without a doubt or fear, unrestrained by mercy, law, love, or religion, absolute in his rights and those of his side, true type and perfect of the men who made the Revolution: opposite to him stands his natural antagonist—the priest turned infidel and Repub-

lican, as rigid, as certain, as entirely fortified against all illumination, against all doubt or hesitation, as the Royalist leader himself, Cimourdain, delegate of the Committee of Public Safety, envoy of Robespierre, but more absolute than Robespierre himself, slave and emissary of the Revolution. There is this difference between the two men, that the noble entertains a lofty indifference towards the *roturier*, which the other does not feel to him. Lantenac would shear off Cimourdain's head as calmly as if he were a cabbage, did necessity put it in his way to do so; but Cimourdain pursues Lantenac with wild hatred, seeking not only his death, but his death by the guillotine, and exults with passionate delight when he finally lays his hand upon him, and feels him in his power. Yet the two have a generic resemblance—they understand each other; they are indeed different developments of the same man. When the splendid pity of the old noble brings him back into the hands of his enemies, Cimourdain is the only man unmoved by admiration, the only one who has the courage to arrest him; and Lantenac is the only man who understands and approves the deed. This curious point of contrast and concord is, we should be disposed to believe, far more the climax of his drama to M. Hugo than the vulgar tragical conclusion which ends the book. Both the men are impersonations of rigid intellectual force and purpose, driven by a tremendous conflict beyond all the restraints of ordinary life, let loose upon the world like destroying angels, to carry each his own cause triumphant at whatever cost.

We are quite unable, however, to decide whether it was or was not M. Hugo's intention to give the advantage to his Royalist. He has certainly done so, whether with or



without his own will. Lantenac, a man of the old race, with the faults that belong to his condition and breeding, has an imposing personality, a primitive nobleness, which the new man, feverish rebel against all the conditions of practicable life, ferocious with the ferocity of idea and theory, not passion—type of that training which, for its highest issue, dissolves all the special features of humanity, and turns a man into a force, dominated by some rigid system, as blind, as unreasoning in all but his own narrow circle as fate, nature, or law—does not possess. Thus, after showing us all his life long how man struggles against and is worsted by these abstract powers, our author takes up a still more subtle theory, and discloses to us the process by which man himself can be turned into an abstract power, and made to become a potent and terrible thing rather than a person, by the obliteration of all those happier privileges of humanity—the power to sympathise, the power to pardon—which engage all mankind in their ordinary conditions in a blessed conspiracy against excessive oppression, cruelty, and wrong. In his anxiety to show how Cimourdain has been formed and shaped into this merciless incarnation of logic, intellect, and power, M. Hugo forgets that he gives him the worst rôle to play; but it is perhaps rather a failure of art on his part than of intention which makes this forgetfulness tell as it does against the man, whom, according to all we know of our author's feelings and principles, we are compelled to believe he intends to bestow the highest part upon. It might be so managed by a hand as skilful as M. Hugo's that a man might have the worst rôle—that he might be constrained by his duty to punish while his rival saved—to be even cruel and remorseless, while his rival showed mercy,—without for-

feiting our sympathy; for of all high acts of self-abnegation, one of the highest is that of accepting opprobrium, and doing by compulsion of duty acts which are alien to nature. This, however, is not the way in which the Revolutionary agent who is pitted against the noble Royalist affects us. Lantenac, the man of tradition, who, rigid as the other, spares nothing that comes in his way, and merciless as fire or storm, crushes calmly under his foot all and every obstacle that opposes him, never loses the interest of the reader, never excites the shivering hatred which we feel for the man who professes to be delivered from the prejudices and bonds of the past, and to be inspired by great principles of moral renovation and a new world; but who, instead of the real indifference of the other to the sufferings of those he crushes, has a feverish pleasure in the destruction of things that oppose him, a grim satisfaction in the number of heads that fall, and in the ever-increasing exaction of sacrifices by the revolutionary demon. Lantenac is cruel, by the way, as a necessity; Cimourdain is cruel, too, by necessity—the one and the other both believing (as, Heaven help us, and alas the day! their descendants still do in France) that this horrible expedient is necessary to the triumph of their respective causes. But the Royalist gives his calm orders, and sees and hears nothing more of the barbarity executed; whereas the Revolutionary smells the bloodshed, and gets drunk with those sanguinary fumes; making a show of pleasure in the very newness of the power to kill, perhaps to hide some reluctance of nature which might otherwise defeat his purpose. Lantenac is dignified even in melodrama—he is noble in his eloquence, in his indifference, a man above the situation in which

we find him. But Cimourdain is the creature of the situation, always excited, feverish, eager, intent upon his theory, ignorant of men. The Royalist has nature on his side: he is struggling at the head of his countrymen by means of warfare familiar to them, for the things he holds most sacred (so far as he holds anything sacred), for the traditions of his kind, the principles he has been born in: he rules with the instinct of a man born to rule, with the ease of habit, which excludes all exaggerations of novelty. But Cimourdain is new in everything—new to authority, unused to war and command, personal even in his abstraction. His redeeming point, of absolute devotion to his cause and belief in it, is shared by his rival, who on his side is quite as sure that to save the king in his prison and restore France to her natural rulers is the highest duty and necessity in earth and heaven. M. Hugo, indeed, has given one gift to his Revolutionary which transcends anything in Lantenac—he has given him love, the parental passion which no one can better set forth. Somehow, however, there is a tigerishness in this affection which prevents it from touching our hearts, and we are infinitely more affected by the grand, simple, and sudden resolution of the old Marquis to save the children who are burning in his old tower—which is told us in a few words, and which he does against his principles, sacrificing his own life, his career, and the liberty he has just regained, in obedience to that sacred pity which cannot look on and see the destruction of three helpless peasant babies, scum of the earth—than we are by all the heroics of Cimourdain's Roman virtue and theatrical suicide. All through, the Royalist has the best of it. He is quieter, calmer, truer, more natural than the other; a curious issue of

a book written in the interests of the Republic, and of one of the greatest efforts that literature has ever made to convey a favourable understanding of the ideal man of the Revolution period to posterity.

We have said that there are three figures which occupy the foreground of this wonderful picture. The third is the type of mere manhood between the iron forces of tradition and theory. He is the clay pot destined to be dashed to pieces by the brazen ones; the natural tender human creature, made up of no theories or superstitions, but of gentle reason and human thoughtfulness, kept in check by sacred prejudices of the heart, by natural compassion, love and pity—a man incapable of cruelty either in thought or otherwise, made of flesh and blood, not of iron, and likely to fare badly the moment he comes into conflict with the metallic souls around him. Gauvain, the young Republican captain, noble scion of a chivalrous race, Vicomte by birth and liberal by opinion, yet pinning his faith neither to Royalty nor to Revolution, is the natural and irresistible contrast to the two iron men on either side of him. He is Lantenac's grand-nephew: he is Cimourdain's pupil. With the one he has no sympathy, except that of admiration for a noble action; with the other he has not much more sympathy, except that gratitude for intellectual nutrition which is not always so powerful a sentiment as might be desired. Cimourdain loves him, as we have said, with a tigerish love; but there is not very much evidence that young Gauvain loves the old, tutor who has again been set over him in a sterner supervision than of old, and who, in fact, demands the post of delegate with the expressed intention of making clemency impossible to the young soldier. Cimourdain hastens to Gauvain's side in feverish



haste, lest Gauvain should perhaps let Lantenac escape on the score of being an old man or a kinsman. The following bit of characteristic conversation shows at once the difference between the young man, visionary and soldier, and the old man, theorist and Revolutionary. Cimourdain has at once discovered on his arrival, that though his former pupil had no intention of allowing Lantenac, the most dangerous man in the country, to escape, his behaviour, in general, was not that of a revolutionary absolutist, but of a merciful man, to whom the ordinary laws of humanity had never been abrogated. "C'est un clement," he says to himself, with mingled pain and disappointment.

"He looked Gauvain in the face, and said, 'Why did you set the nuns of the Convent of Saint Marc-le-Blanc at liberty?'"

"'I do not fight with women,' answered Gauvain.

"'These women hate the people; and in hatred a woman is worth ten men. Why did you refuse to send the troop of fanatical old priests to the revolutionary tribunal?'"

"'I don't fight with old men.'

"'An old priest is worse than a young one. Rebellion is more dangerous when provoked by the grey-haired—the people have faith in wrinkles. No false pity, Gauvain. Regicides are liberators. Fix your eyes upon the tower of the Temple.'

"'The tower of the Temple! I should free the dauphin from it. I don't fight with children.'

"The eye of Cimourdain became severe. 'Gauvain, you must learn that war is necessary against a woman when she calls herself Marie-Antoinette; against an old man when he is named Pius VI.; against a child when he is called Louis Capet.'

"'Master, I am not a political man.'

"'Try not to be a dangerous man. Why, when the rebel Jean Tretou, driven to bay and hopeless at the attack of the outpost of Corsac, turned alone, sword in hand, against your col-

umn, did you cry, "*Open the ranks; let him pass*?"'

"'Because fifteen hundred men are too many to slaughter one.'

"'Why, when you saw your soldiers about to kill the Vendean Joseph Bézier, who was wounded and dragging himself along at Cailleterie d'Astillé, did you say, "*Forward! I take him in hand*," and fire your pistol in the air?'"

"'Because I do not kill men who are down.'

"'And you are wrong. Both of them are now at the head of bands. Joseph Bézier is Moustache and Jean Fictou is Jambe-d'Argent. By saving these two men you have given two enemies to the Republic.'

"'My intention was to make friends for her, not to give her enemies.'

"'Why, after the victory of Landéan, did not you shoot the three hundred peasants whom you made prisoners?'"

"'Because, Bonchamp having spared the Republican prisoners, I determined that it should be known that the Republic spared royalist prisoners.'

"'Then if you take Lantenac you will spare him too?'"

"'No.'

"'Why? Since you have spared three hundred peasants—'

"'The peasants are ignorant—Lantenac knows what he is doing.'

"'But Lantenac is your kinsman.'

"'France is nearer of kin.'

"'Lantenac is an old man.'

"'Lantenac is a foreigner—Lantenac is of no age—Lantenac calls for the English invasion. Lantenac is—he is the enemy of the country. The duel between him and me can finish only by his death or mine.'

"'Gauvain, do not forget this promise.'

"'It is made.'

This is the difference between the two men. To the young soldier men are men, and women women, and children children. To his terrible instructor they are mere symbols of opposition to be crushed, of enmity to be overcome. The one weighs right and reason, condemning where there is cause, but not without cause, and capable of nothing but respect and pity towards the weak, the wounded, the

solitary, and ignorant; whereas to the other, in the fervour of his theoretical fury, there is neither man nor woman, neither good nor evil, neither reason nor right, but one blank indiscriminate mass of enemies to be exterminated. "The revolution has one enemy," he says—"the old world, for which it is pitiless; just as the surgeon has one enemy, gangrene, for which he has no pity." "If I may not pardon," answers Gauvain, "it is not worth the trouble to conquer." "It was like a dialogue between the sword and the axe," says M. Hugo. His Cimourdain is himself the old world without knowing it—comprehensible enough to the old world, on the other side, to the man who acts on exactly similar principles, from a directly opposite point of view—but not comprehensible to the real representative of the new world, who begins to rise between, but who, alas! has never got sufficiently the upper hand in France to curb the two absolutists on either side of it. Gauvain is the least tangible of the three figures who occupy the chief place in this book: he is doomed from the first, in his reasonableness, charity, and magnanimous manhood. Such men are never the right tools for popular frenzy. He is the ideal man, the chivalrous hero, the impersonation of all that is noble in the old type, with all that is best in the new. Such a being is much more difficult to individualise than the two iron men on either side of him; or, at least, than the perfectly consistent and tranquil man of iron whose destruction he has vowed. Neither of the others, indeed, are at all equal to Lantenac. He is drawn as with a diamond pen—clear, perfect, and complete. In him there is no conflict, no infuriating stimulus of new principles to make his old nature wilder, as in Cimourdain; no hopeless gener-

sity, humanity, tender-heartedness—as in the young and thoughtful Gauvain—to transport him into those regions of the ideal, seldom perhaps trod with assured and happy feet by mortal men, and never possible at all in the fiery overturn and conflict of revolution.

The higher action of the piece is all with these three; but tragically twisted in and involved with them is the fate of the other hapless three—the infants hastily adopted by the *bataillon* of the Bonnet-Rouge—hastily carried off from the destroyed forces by the insurgent Vendéans; swept along in the train of Lantenac, as he is gradually hunted and surrounded and driven into his old tower of La Tourgue, in which the fate of the three leaders and the three innocent hostages is alike decided. The mother of the children, meanwhile, shot by Lantenac's orders, healed and set afoot by the old beggar of the woods, who had saved Lantenac on his first landing—searches for them across the wild country, a poor crazed tragic creature, such a type of the half-brutalised peasant, lowest of intellectual beings, and driven still lower by misery, as no one can paint like M. Hugo. How the passion of maternity can cast a wild illumination over such a creature, raising her in her lowness to the most tragic eminence, and placing her forlorn figure, miserable, haggard, and hopeless, on a level with the greatest, is a transformation which this writer has shown to us before. His Michelle Flechard is like the mother of his Esmeralda, a pitiful tragical impersonation, never rising for a moment above the low level of nature, yet grand in the one overwhelming sentiment which possesses her. While she stumbles wildly across the unknown country, interrogating hopelessly the sometimes sympathetic, sometimes careless spectators, Lantenac has been driven home to his cover, and with a



little party of eighteen men is shut up in La Tourgue, besieged by the army commanded by Gauvain and Cimourdain—a body of four thousand five hundred men. It is the moment of crisis, of climax, in all their lives. Indomitable, the old royalist prepares for his enemies, with perfect coolness and self-possession—for defence as long as defence is possible; for destruction when the time of defence is over; in his heart no trembling, in his mind no hesitation. With a most subtle touch of art, M. Hugo represents the besieging commanders as feeling each a certain tenderness for the old tower: Gauvain, because it is his birthplace, the home of his fathers; Cimourdain secretly, and with a sense of guilt, because it is the scene of those early studies which made his pupil the child of his heart; whereas Lantenac himself entertained no such prejudice; “he had lived in Versailles, and had no superstition for La Tourgue: he had taken refuge there, having no other shelter, but he would have demolished it without scruple;” a wonderful touch of art. The siege commences; a breach has been made by the army outside, enormous preparations of defence by the little band within, culminating in the pitch and straw and match, all prepared and ready, by which the combatants mean to destroy tower, host-ages, and themselves, if no better fate may be. The stern hum of the republican army is below; death and destruction are about to blaze forth, the trumpet from beneath has blown the last summons to the desperate garrison: when all at once we turn the page, and are introduced to such a scene as takes away the reader's breath, and brings the tears to his eyes. The three children are in the library, left there alone in their little cribs, each with its spoon and basin by its side. The windows are all open, the warm air

of August caressing the sleepers, the sun shining in; and Georgette, twenty months old, is the first to wake.

“The children woke up; first of all the little girl. The waking of children is like the opening of flowers: a perfume seems to breathe out of these fresh souls. Georgette, the one who was twenty months old, the youngest of the three, raised her little head, sat up, looked at her feet, and began to chatter.

“A ray of the morning shone on her cradle. It would have been difficult to say which was the rosier, the feet of Georgette or the dawn. The two others were still asleep; men are more heavy (*‘c'est plus lourd les hommes’*). Gay and calm, Georgette chattered.

“René-Jean was brown, Gros-Alain was chesnut, Georgette fair. . . . René-Jean had the look of a little Hercules. He slept on his face, with his two fists in his eyes; Gros-Alain had his two legs out of his little bed. All the three were in rags. The clothes which the Bataillon of the Bonnet-Rouge had given them had fallen to pieces; what they wore could scarcely be called a shirt; the boys were almost naked; Georgette was wrapt in a rag which had been a petticoat. Who took care of these children it was impossible to say. They had no mother. The wild peasant-soldiers who dragged them from post to post, gave them their share of the soup. The little ones had to make the best of it. Every man was their master, no one their father. But the rags of children are full of light. They were charming.

“Georgette chattered. What a bird sings an infant babbles. It is the same hymn—indistinct, stammering, profound. The child has something beyond the bird, a sombre human destiny before him. From thence comes the sadness of the man who listens, mingled with the joy of the child who sings. . . . This confused murmur of thought, which yet goes no further than instinct, contains an unconscious appeal to eternal justice; perhaps a protest upon the threshold before entering, a protest humble and penetrating; this ignorance smiling at the infinite, compromises all creation in the lot which

shall fall to that feeble and defenceless being. . . . What Georgette murmured did not make her sad, for all her little face was one smile. Her mouth smiled, her eyes smiled, the dimples of her cheeks smiled. . . . The sky was blue, it was warm and fine. The fragile little creature, knowing nothing, understanding nothing, softly immersed in a reverie which was not thought, felt itself in security in the heart of nature, among those honest trees, that sincere verdure, the pure and peaceful country, amid the sound of nests, of fountains, of flies, of leaves, above which shone the great innocence of the sun.

"After Georgette, René-Jean, the eldest, the big one, who was past four, awoke. He stood up, strode in manly guise across his cradle, saw his basin of soup, took it as the ordinary course of affairs, sat down on the floor, and began to eat. The chattering of Georgette had not roused Gros-Alain, but at the sound of the spoon in the basin he turned over with a spring and opened his eyes. Gros-Alain was three—he saw his dish, stretched out his hand to take it, and without getting out of his bed, his basin on his knee, his spoon in his fist, he followed René-Jean's example and began to eat. Georgette was not disturbed by these proceedings, and the modulations of her voice seemed to assume the rocking measure of a dream. Her great open eyes were raised. Whatever the roof or vault may be that is over a child's head, it is heaven that is reflected in its eyes.

"When René-Jean had finished, he scratched the dish with his spoon, sighed, and said with dignity, 'I have eaten my soup.' This roused Georgette from her reverie. 'Poupoupe,' she said; and seeing that René-Jean had eaten, and that Gros-Alain ate, she took the basin of soup by her side and ate too, not without carrying her spoon as often to her ear as to her mouth. Now and then she cast civilisation aside and ate with her fingers. . . .

"All at once there was heard outside out of the wood the sound of a bugle, a sort of fanfare, severe and arrogant. To this bugle a trumpet answered from the height of the tower. . . . Then from the edge of the forest rose a voice distant but precise, which cried distinctly, 'Brigands, surrender! If you

do not surrender at discretion before sunset, we shall commence the attack.'

"A voice, which resembled the growl of thunder, answered from the platform, 'Attack!' . . .

"These voices did not reach the children; but the bugle and the trumpet sounded higher and further, and Georgette at the first sound erected her little throat and ceased to eat. At the sound of the trumpet she put down her spoon in her dish; at the second sound of the bugle she raised the little forefinger of her right hand, keeping time with it to the cadence of the summons, replied to by the second sound of the trumpet. When both had ceased she remained thoughtful, her finger in the air, and murmured in an undertone 'Misque.' . . .

"The two others, René-Jean and Gros-Alain, had paid no attention to either trumpet or bugle; they were absorbed by something else. A beetle was in the act of crossing the floor of the library. Gros-Alain saw it first, and cried out, 'A beast!' René-Jean ran to see what it was. 'It bites!' resumed Gros-Alain.

"Don't meddle with it,' said René-Jean; and the two together set themselves to watch this passer-by. However, Georgette had now finished her soup; she looked round to see what her brothers were about. René-Jean and Gros-Alain were in the recess of a window, seated on their heels, and bending over the beetle. Their foreheads touched, their hair mingled, they held their breath, wondering and considering the beast, which had stopped short, and made no movement, little delighted with so much admiration. Georgette, seeing her brothers absorbed, wanted to know what it was. It was no easy matter to get at them, but she undertook it: the voyage was bristling with difficulties; there were things lying about on the floor, stools upset, masses of papers, empty cases, portfolios, heaps of various kinds, around which it was necessary to steer—an entire archipelago of rocks. Georgette took the venture in hand. . . . When she reached the end she stumbled, but seizing with her little hands the end of the ladder, which was enormous, she raised herself up, doubled the promontory, looked at René-Jean and Gros-Alain, and laughed."



We cannot follow the delicious babble of these children. The bee-like disappears, and "other events" follow. Swallows fly across the depths of sky upon which their window opens. A bee comes in. The noise of some military movements deep down in the wood preliminary to the assault delight them for a moment. Then the boys begin some rougher play. "Gros-Alain imitated all the movements and gestures of René-Jean; Georgette not so much. Three-years-old copies four—twenty months preserves its independence. Georgette remained seated, saying a word from time to time. Georgette made no phrases;—she was a thinker; she talked in apothegms; she was monosyllabical." Never was there a more lovely study of children, or one more tenderly ideal and absolutely true. Their attention diverted at any moment, caught by a nothing, re-caught by something still more trivial; their absorbed attention so long as the charm lasts, their musings, their laughter, the sudden passion with which they throw themselves upon the big book and tear it to pieces, the perpetual movement of these little souls eager for something new, and mischievous activity of the little fingers when the fiery zeal of iconoclasm comes upon them—all this is set before us with the most loving grace, tears in the eyes, smiles on the lips; and hard must the reader be who can read this delightful and touching scene, or rather series of scenes, without an emotion corresponding to that with which the writer has made it. We do not know where to lay our hands upon any picture of childhood worthy to place beside it. It is infinitely more true to fact than Stothard's baby pictures; far more daring in detail than any vulgar imitations of nursery life would venture to be—yet perfect in poetry and delicious

ideal grace. Georgette, with her little finger in the air, remarking meditatively on the "Misique"—woke up as she drops to sleep by the first cannon, raising her finger again, uttering her reflective "*Poum!*"—then falling into sudden slumber, is too sweet in her baby individuality to feel to us like anything in a book. Nothing but the closest, tender observation could have revealed this exquisite little figure even to the eyes of genius. An inferior hand may give us heroes and heroines, philosophers and generals; but we have no one but Victor Hugo who could have painted this child.

We feel as reluctant to turn back from Georgette and her brothers to the siege of La Tourgue, as it is natural to feel in the transition from anything that is peaceful, beautiful, and sweet, into a barbarous conflict. The episode of the children is not long. Forty pages sum up the lovely interlude; and we are drawn back to the eighteen desperadoes underneath them, and the besieging enemy below. We cannot, however, feel in the desperate struggle which ensues—in the fight for chamber after chamber—even in the daring of Sergeant Radoub, and the diabolical bravery of L'Imänus, the peasant lieutenant of Lantenac—all the interest which this breathless struggle is intended to convey. At the very last moment, when nothing but death is before Lantenac, a secret passage is discovered, at the very idea of which he has scoffed, and safety is suddenly placed within his reach. He escapes, L'Imänus staying behind to cover the retreat and set fire to the tower. Then ensues a terrible and most picturesque scene. The unhappy mother, Michelle Flechard, half-dead with fatigue and despair, reaches La Tourgue at the moment when the fire gains the mastery, and when she, and with

her the whole army outside, perceive at the open window of the library, high up beyond reach, the three children asleep in a mass of rounded limbs and drooping heads. In the darkness of the evening it is only the gleam of the fire which reveals to the crowd below the deadly danger of the innocent group above. The ladder, which Gauvain had sent for, has been taken on the way and burned by the insurgents in mistake for the guillotine, and there is no means possible of reaching the high window and saving the children. The mother, standing on the other side of the moat, has, with her first shriek of despair, disclosed the horrible situation to every one around—and to Lantenac, who, traversing in safety his subterranean passage, is arrested by that wild and terrible cry, and looking out through the brushwood which veils the opening, sees the miserable creature transformed into a tragic image of fate, and is made aware of the situation. Silent he stands and listens, hears her frantic monologue, and the vain cries for ladders and for water, neither of them procurable, which sound over his head. M. Hugo spares us all description of the feelings of the old Royalist—a self-denial which only the supreme instinct of high Art could have made possible to him. Lantenac is safe, he is the only hope of his cause, he is not “un clement,” like his nephew Gauvain. One would have thought that to damn the representative of all he hates by making him turn his back and secure his own safety, would have been the natural procedure of the great Republican writer. But the poet is greater than the partisan. Lantenac has no interval of hysterical self-consciousness; he says nothing to himself, nor does the author dwell upon what he was likely to have thought or said. “The Marquis felt in his pocket,

and touched there the key of the iron door. Then, stooping under the arch by which he had escaped, he went back to the passage from which he had just come out.” This is all. It is a triumph of self-restraint which we appreciate deeply. The waking of the children is almost as fine and touching as the day’s play which preceded it. At first they have no fear. “Joli!” said Georgette. “When men are terrified, children are curious,” says this loving student of childhood. “He who is easily astonished is hard to terrify. Ignorance is full of intrepidity. Children have so little right to hell that if they saw it they would admire it.” Notwithstanding, the little ones begin to feel the heat; they see their mother and call to her, and a vague sense of horror and doubt creeps over them. At this moment Lantenac appears at the window. He raises the long ladder upon which little Georgette had made a highway for herself, and which had been placed on the floor of the large room. The soldiers rush to help him. “Vive la Republique!” cries Radoub, half-frantic, as he seizes the end of this instrument of salvation. “Vive le Roi!” calls the Marquis, who pushes it to him. “Say what you like,” shouts the soldier; “as many follies as you please. You are the *bon Dieu*.” Thus the children are saved. We cannot refrain from giving the reader this last glimpse of Georgette. The boys are saved first — René - Jean resisting, and striking the soldier who receives him out of the arms of Lantenac, Gros-Alain crying with fright.

“The Marquis went back into the blazing room. Georgette was alone. She smiled. This man of granite felt something moist coming to his eyes. ‘What do they call thee?’ he asked.

“‘Orgette,’ she said.

“He took her in his arms, still smiling; and at the moment when he handed her to Radoub, his dim and



lofty mind dazzled by this innocence, the old man gave the child a kiss. 'It is the little one!' cried the soldiers; and Georgette, in her turn, was passed from arm to arm amid cries of adoration. The old grenadiers sobbed, and she smiled upon them."

Meanwhile Lantenac, saviour of others, himself now beyond hope, stands at the head of the ladder, looking down upon this scene. His thoughts, his feelings, are again with wise power left to our imagination. "No one thought of him; perhaps not even himself."

"He remained some moments dreamily on the edge of the window, as if he would leave the fire time to interfere. Then, without hurry, slowly, proudly, he stepped over the sill, and without turning round, straight, erect, with his back to the steps of the ladder, the flames behind him, the precipice before him, began to descend in silence with the majesty of a ghost. Those who were on the ladder threw themselves down. A shiver ran through the spectators, a kind of sacred horror made all draw back from him as from a vision. He, however, descended slowly into the shadow beneath him; while they recoiled, he approached. Not a line was on his marble paleness, no flash in his visionary eyes. At each step which he made towards the men whose terrified eyes were fixed upon him in the darkness, he seemed taller; the ladder trembled under his solemn foot; he looked like the statue of the Commandant going back to the sepulchre.

"When the Marquis had reached the bottom—when he was on the last range of the ladder, with one foot on the ground—a hand seized his collar. He turned round.

"'I arrest you,' said Cimourdain.

"'You do well,' said Lantenac."

We confess that this scene is to us the great mystery of the book, and we cannot pretend to fathom the meaning of the author, upon which, in other points, he leaves us in no great doubt. Whether it is his deliberate intention thus to transfer to his Royalist the gran-

deur of the situation, while his favourite Cimourdain falls into the secondary place; or whether in one of those curious fits of artistic blindness, to which all men of genius seem liable, he is of opinion that the theatrical proposal of Cimourdain, a few chapters before, to sacrifice himself, on condition that Lantenac should be sacrificed, raises the Revolutionary to so great a height, that his rival has a kind of right to a similar advantage—we are unable to tell. Cimourdain up to this point has been little more than a promise—after it he is nothing but a failure. Theatrical as is his offer to the defenders of the tower to give himself up to their vengeance if they will give up Lantenac,—a proposal which is more base than grand, though the author does not intend it so—his Brutus attitude in respect to Gauvain and his melodramatic conclusion are more theatrical still. Our imagination is irresistibly driven to the Porte Saint Martin, when we hear the report of the pistol simultaneous with the stroke of the axe, by which Gauvain's inexorable judge proves his inability to survive Gauvain. It is impossible to doubt that Cimourdain would reappear next moment in front of the curtain, and make a complacent bow to us, did we but cheer loud enough; but no desire to cheer moves our mind. When Lantenac, on the contrary, walks away out of his prison in Gauvain's cloak, we feel the man to be perfectly true to his nature and position. The change in his circumstances is so sudden that he is for the moment half-stupefied, and passes out through the guard-room in a kind of dream, mechanically returning the salute of the soldiers, who take him for Gauvain.

"When he was outside, with the grass under his feet, the forest close at

hand, and before him the free space—night, liberty, life—he stopped short, and stood for a moment motionless, like a man who has allowed himself to be set in motion, who has yielded to surprise, and who, having taken advantage of an open door, considers whether he has done well or ill, hesitates before he goes further, and gives audience to his second thoughts. After a few seconds of reverie, he raised his right hand, cracked his middle finger against his thumb, said, ‘*Ma foi !*’ and went on.”

This perfectly characteristic disappearance entirely satisfies the reader. It was Gauvain’s affair, and not Lantenac’s, how it was all to finish. He himself had accepted without hesitation the results of his own act of devotion, hoping no escape, fearing no catastrophe. With the same calm he accepts the substitution of Gauvain for himself. The man is of iron, and pretends nothing more. Humanity comes upon him for one supreme moment; to be cruel in general is quite possible to him for the sake of his cause, but to be cruel in detail and for no end is impossible. Thus self-possessed, cool, and splendid, he disappears out of our vision: he has had the best of it all through; he has conquered his unwilling historian, and made himself the first person in the story, in spite of Hugo. The artist is great, but Art is greater, and Lantenac carries the day over the very man who created him—a quite incalculable triumph.

But while this picture of the royalist Marquis is an unquestionable success, and the episode of the three children is certainly one of the most beautiful that Victor Hugo or any man has ever produced, we doubt whether he can be said to have succeeded in what we presume is the real object of the work—the revelation of the Revolution and the Revolutionary in their best aspect to the reader. There is

much that is fine in the sketches of the aspect of Revolution in Paris; but we doubt whether any one will derive a clearer idea of, or more respectful interest in, Robespierre, Danton, and Marat, from their introduction into these pages. The description of Paris in its external aspects is fine. Some of the details carry an impression of thrilling reality in the extraordinary disturbance of all natural human order, which strikes the imagination more than greater matters. “The Louis d’or was worth three thousand nine hundred and fifty francs;” money-changers were in all the streets; *queues* of humble waiters upon Providence at every baker’s shop; yet with all this, our author tells us, “very little theft; wild destitution, but stoical probity,” and on the whole a determined content among the people, who played cards at the corners of the streets, and trusted to fate, and read the newspapers, at a moment when we, looking from afar off on this terrible scene, can see nothing in Paris but the guillotine, and can scarcely realise that the Place de Grève was far enough from the sight and thoughts of the crowds in most of these streets. “With this was mingled, especially in the vanquished party, a certain haughty weariness of living. One man wrote to Fouquier Tinville, “Have the goodness to deliver me from life—here is my address.” All this brings before us the wild and strange condition of affairs; though scarcely the divine right of the Revolution to be accepted as another form of that mysterious force which we call Necessity or Fate. In the description of Cimourdain again (though there is a great deal too much of it) there are many pregnant lines. “Cimourdain knew everything and was ignorant of everything. He knew all that science could teach him, and nothing of life. From thence



came his rigidity. He had his eyes blindfolded, like the Themis of Homer. He possessed the blind certitude of the arrow, which sees only the aim and flies to that. In revolution there is nothing so terrible as a straight line—Cimourdain went straight before him and was fatal." This description is wonderful in its force, and might explain the mingled strength and impotence of many men ; but the man of whom it is said cannot manage to embody it, however his author tries to make him do so ; the truth and power of the description do not give dignity to the personage, who is throughout laboured, false, and exaggerated. It is curious that M. Hugo's failure should have been on this side of the picture—the one which, according to all his professed views and principles, he ought to understand best. Is it because the Vendean blood in him is, after all, stronger than opinion, that the Republican author—the Apostle of the Revolution—shows such evident traces of a higher comprehension when he treats the peasant of La Vendée, the Royalist general—the men of noble race and ancient traditions—than when he endeavours to breathe an inflated and extravagant life into the Revolutionary? Nothing can be more curious than this question. Gauthier, his favourite, his young hero, the type of all that is noblest on the two sides, the ideal man whom necessity demands as a sacrifice, but whom the poet loves even when he slays him—whom he must slay because he loves him, because he is too beautiful for earth—is no son of the people, but a young noble,

with haughty blood in his veins, and a long inheritance of honours behind him. Is it chance that makes this so, or is M. Hugo himself less a democrat than he gives himself credit for being? The inquiry is a curious one ; and the work itself is a problem in Art.

We had placed at the head of this paper not the name of the book we have really discussed, but a general title, with the intention of embracing more than one work, as it is our habit to do. But what other work can we place by the side of '*Quatre-Vingt-Treize*'? We do not pretend to be able to find one. Very few men now living have the power of writing as M. Hugo writes ; still fewer of dashing upon so splendid a canvas a picture so varied, so crowded, so full of original power. All his political vagaries and all his philosophical madnesses, absurd as these often are, and pernicious, fade from our recollection when we find him thus on his natural ground. Though even the giant stumbles and falls sometimes, it is as a giant that he grasps the scene and the men, setting them before us with a force and potency which is characteristically his own, and which age seems only to mature and cultivate, not to weaken. No finer impersonation than that of Lantenac has ever come from his pen ; and we might search deep and far, both in his own works and in those of his worthiest contemporaries, before we could find anything worthy to be placed by the side of *Georgette*. In this little figure, the poet has achieved one of his greatest triumphs.

## POLITICS AFTER EASTER.

THE reception of the Conservative Budget by the leader of the Opposition (if it be right so to designate Mr Gladstone) was forbearing, courteous, and even kind. We believe that the Budget did not lie open to serious censure; but, notwithstanding its merits, Mr Gladstone, if he had been so minded, might, without seriously damaging it, have made it appear in the worst possible light. He would have conformed to his own tastes and habits if, in a voluminous and meaningless speech, he had—to the satisfaction of his own friends, if of no one else—held the production up to condemnation and contempt. We are, therefore, the more indebted to him in that he not only was pleased to be gracious, but that he put a restraint on his own disposition in order to be so. Nothing could be gentler than his handling of the matter; and although it is well known that personal relations between him and the Chancellor of the Exchequer are very friendly, yet we think that we detect in his criticism something more than unwillingness to attack a friend. His whole speech proved that he wished to approve wherever he could properly do so; and that where he felt compelled to object, he was fain to make his protest considerately and blandly. His behaviour deserves to be fully acknowledged. The attitude which he assumed must, however, have much surprised all parties. We admit that it agreeably surprised us; and we have the testimony of their own press to convince us that it seriously disappointed our opponents. They cannot forgive the right honourable gentleman for letting the Conservative Budget escape so easily, and their chagrin

is not difficult to understand. Their last hope was cut away, the one hope which had cheered them a little through all their recent reverses. When they found themselves utterly shattered as a party, they looked forward with good heart to a speedy restoration to importance. "Their finance, their finance!" they said as exultingly as in their circumstances it was possible to speak; "wait till we see their idea of disposing of the five millions; wait till we see their project dissected by the first financial genius in Europe." They were holding Mr Gladstone in the slips, as it were, to be let loose at the proper moment on the unlucky Budget, which he was to rend, and trample, and shake for their delectation. After its annihilation, the people would soon repent and return. The result cannot but have sorely disappointed these flattering hopes. The tyrant when he saw the lion turn and lick the condemned slave;—the Moabite king, when the prophet whom he had engaged to curse his enemies at last declined to utter the commination, and, behold, he "blessed them altogether,"—must have felt very much as our Radical friends felt after the discussion on the Budget. So utterly cast down are they that we are not aware of their having predicted evil for us since that shipwreck of their hopes.

Certainly the state of things in the political arena suggests matter for grave contemplation to all parties,—to those who are gratified by it, and to those whom it balks of their expected triumph. The Liberals, doubtless, marvel that they find themselves like sheep without a shepherd so soon after the days of their tyrannous and galling domina-



tion. It must be occurring to the more violent and reckless of them that, somehow or other, they have rather mismanaged their affairs. They do not, of course, allow that any of their champions can be suddenly smitten with admiration of Conservatism; they know that the Budget is very different from that which they would have proposed; and yet they see that the finance measures have not suffered at all from their attacks. Whence comes this moderation and forbearance? Have they worried their own chiefs until the latter, no longer officially bound to them, have lost the heart to fight vigorously under their colours, and so decline the combat altogether? Does it strike them that their insubordinate conduct has been felt and resented; that they are not the most pleasant of allies even in sunny days; and that the free display of the rough side of their character when fortune chose to frown, only the more strongly demonstrated their unfitness to work in concert with men of education and polish? No doubt they have their grievances.

They think that they have been unfairly refused many changes and confiscations which, by aiding to effect other changes and confiscations about which they were themselves indifferent, they earned the right to. Many who so zealously put their strength to pulling down the Irish Church, cannot understand why, now that they desire to pull down the Church of England, those whom they formerly obliged with a strong pull will not help them in return. Some, who, without much interest in Ireland, lent their support to the muleting of Irish landlords, and the fettering of Irish property, don't see why they should not have had their turn at English landlords and English property. It is certain, too, that both

the defeated Ministers and the defeated party are sore at the action which the people took. Either of them may have expected increased strength from the popular vote, but neither could have been prepared for a verdict against both—a clean sweep of everything Radical.

We fear that Mr Gladstone, if his feelings are hurt, will hardly make allowance for his late supporters. Perhaps they will make but little for him. Those, however, who had no part in the internal strife, cannot fail to see that the present state of things followed inevitably the compact by which the Radicals took Mr Gladstone for their leader. The marvel is, not that they came to ruin as a party, but that they managed to stave off ruin so long. It suited Conservative tactics not to hurry them from power, or the catastrophe must have occurred much sooner. It was an ill-sorted alliance which brought them together; but now that they have entered into partnership, an impartial mind can see no fair ground of quarrel. We have our suspicions of what is about to ensue, but it is too early to say yet what we apprehend. We must wait and see in what way Mr Gladstone's *quasi* retirement from active political life may operate. He must elect, one sees, either to lead or not to lead. His party cannot consent to be commanded always by subordinates, save when on great field days the chief may condescend to appear at their head. In the mean time it is not to be expected that we, who have always exhorted him to return to academical pursuits, will quarrel with the inclination which he feels for literary leisure.

How much more congenial must be life in a study amid a wealth of literature, than life in the House of Commons subject to such rude assaults as that which Mr Smollet

lately indulged in ! We think that, considering how the whole press of the country has been canvassing the manner in which the late election was brought about, and that, whatever his expectation may have been, Mr Gladstone certainly gained nothing by his tactics, he might have been spared this *rencontre*. We are happy to think that we in our March number\* stated our belief that the dissolution of Parliament had not been long premeditated except as a possible *dernier ressort*. We do not accuse him of dissimulation in that respect, and we do take into consideration the desperate straits in which, no doubt, he found himself at the end of January. Many Ministers might perhaps have thought that, having once taken the step of summoning Parliament for the despatch of business, and so impressed the country with the belief that the Session was to commence in a few days, they were precluded in equity, if not in law, from suddenly reversing their policy and decreeing a dissolution. But such is not Mr Gladstone's way of looking at things. Twenty times within the last five years we have seen how easily his mind is reconciled to the straining to the uttermost of a law or a custom, or even a provision of the Constitution, when a measure on which he is intent can be promoted thereby. But the method of the dissolution and the mistakes of the Greenwich manifesto had, during the election time, been submitted to the public judgment, and received public condemnation. It is not quite clear why Mr Smollet felt called upon to be Mr Gladstone's accuser before Parliament ; still less clear is it why Mr Gladstone thought it necessary to plead in such an excited strain to the indictment, which, after all, he did not satis-

factorily answer. The House did not appear to recognise the necessity, and if the challenge were to be answered at all, a knight armed *cap-à-pie* was hardly required to enter the lists. A stout yeoman able to use his quarter-staff or his fists might have seemed a fitter champion. And here, again, one is constrained to ask what had become of the numerous retainers who not long ago would have deemed it the height of good fortune to be allowed to do battle in the ring for Mr Gladstone. Why was the right honourable gentleman left to fight the battle alone ? It is rather too soon for him to be utterly forsaken.

The monotony of the Session has been enlivened by an Irish debate, from which one learns with pleasure that the laws are being enforced in Ireland with a promptitude and vigour which for some years past have been rare in that part of the world. Of course the enforcement of the law is a grievance to law-breakers ; and hence the House of Commons has been appealed to against the perfectly legal, and, as would appear, most necessary acts of the Government. An Irish newspaper, entitled 'The Flag of Ireland,' has, it seems, been guilty of the gross indecency of writing of her Majesty the Queen as "the foreign lady who holds this country in subjection ;" it has glorified the Fenian movement ; and it spoke disparagingly of the English army when it was supposed to have been surrounded and cut off in Ashanti. For these offences it received a warning from the Lords Justices, the purport of this warning being, that the offences, or any of them, if repeated, would bring the paper within the power of the law, and subject it to summary suppression. The feel-

\* Art., "Mr Gladstone's Night Attack, and its Results."



ing of every honest Briton who came to know of the matter undoubtedly was, that the writer of such infamous stuff, instead of being simply warned, should have been summarily punished. He would have felt the public indignation if he had uttered his abominable sayings where John Bull could lay his hand upon him. But the law prescribes, and no doubt properly prescribes, that a warning shall in the first instance be given to offenders of this class, to be followed by something a little sharper if the offence should be repeated. The Government, therefore, has not shrunk from the suppression of this unbecoming language: it has done all that it was empowered to do; and we, who burn with the consciousness that the offender has escaped too cheaply, may rest assured that, if the hint of the Lords Justices be not taken, he will have the full benefit of the law when he next may commit himself. As a proof that the Irish Executive is not likely to flinch, we may mention that this is not the only instance in which it has shown vigour in repressing disaffection. One Mr Thomas M'Evoy, a magistrate of the County Meath, thought fit at an election meeting to indulge in the delivery of a disloyal and pro-Fenian speech, for which he has been promptly deprived of his commission of the peace. These examples, be it remembered, could not have been made by a Government dependent for its existence upon the Popish vote. The same faction in the House of Commons which can now only bluster and tell out their grievance (*proh pudor!*), might have threatened the late Government with annihilation if it should persist in a firm and just execution of the law. Hence we may discern the enormous gain to order in Ireland produced by the late change of administration. A Government to which the Popish

vote is essential cannot avoid conniving at such crimes as the body of Irish members choose to take under their protection. Had the choice of the people been less decidedly expressed than it was at the last election, the Irish members would have held—as they expected to hold—the scales in which the two great parties hung, and might have inclined the beam either way at their pleasure. A more dangerous state of things it is impossible to conceive; and electors on this side the water, when they read of these occurrences in Ireland, will rejoice that they did not half do their work, but returned a British majority outnumbering not only the Irish vote, but all those sections which would have coalesced with the Home Rule and other factions for the sake of maintaining their party in power.

The language of the 'Flag of Ireland' affords a melancholy proof of the amount of conciliation that has been produced by despoiling and disestablishing the Irish Church, and by slighting and discouraging the most loyal portion of the Irish people. The editor of the print does not, of course, stand alone. He represents a league or section of some kind and some magnitude, and one which does not hesitate to give its opinions to the world. Whatever the section may be, it seems but slightly sensible of, or responsive to, the great benefits conferred on Ireland by the late Government. We do not mean, however, to imply that the 'Flag of Ireland' represents more than a fraction of the Home Rulers, Fenians, and what not. At any rate, it does not imitate their tactics. It is too outspoken—lets us see too plainly the end that it is pursuing; it utters sentiments which, if uttered by all those who are struggling for the so-called Irish freedom, would speedily alienate

sympathy in this island, and bring the different movements to a standstill. At present the great body of the turbulent Irish profess to be, and we believe are, perfectly loyal to the Crown. The wire-pullers in Rome and elsewhere don't let them see too far into the ultimate designs. This was proved by innocent Mr Digby, who, in the debate of which we write, said that "when he joined the Home-Rule Association, he did so in the hope that it would afford the basis of a sure alliance between the two countries, but certainly not to encourage the publication of miserable and seditious libels." We quite believe you, Mr Digby; and we trust that you and other honourable and loyal gentlemen will, before you have committed yourselves too far, take more heed to your ways, ascertain what the adventure is in which you have embarked, whither it points, and whether the 'Flag of Ireland' has not, in its unguarded wrath, only too plainly demonstrated the real designs of those who are abusing your generous natures, and using you for purposes which you would abhor if you understood them. The pear is not ripe yet, and the 'Flag of Ireland,' though it meets with lenient treatment from the "foreign lady" whom it has maligned, may, for its loquacity, get a harder knock from another "foreign lady"—a lady clothed in purple and scarlet, of notoriously ill fame, and who, manœuvre as she may, will never prevail against the gracious lady who sits on the throne of these realms, while there is a Briton alive to defend the Protestant dynasty.

Mr Butt's speech on this wretched affair evinced a bold ingenuity worthy of the late Mr O'Connell. The honourable and learned member attacked the Government for warning the seditious paper. The seditious article would, he thought, have

passed unnoticed, if Ministers had not, by the course they took, directed attention to it. The article, he argued (we know not on what grounds), would never make a rebel, but the warning might do so. This is the very purest Irish doctrine. Sedition, treason, are quite innoxious in themselves; it is only when the law attempts to interfere with them that they are dangerous. The general inference, of course, is that it is exceedingly unwise to throw any impediment in the way of Irish crime, which, provided it may only have free scope, will be the most harmless thing in the world. Absurd as all this reads, the time is not so very old when the unwisdom of it would have been less apparent. When there was a weak Government in office, and when a large division of Englishmen had been persuaded to believe in Irish grievances, it certainly would have been most indiscreet to direct public attention to seditious writings. The warning would have been followed by no decisive action, and might have excited sympathy for the criminal. The Executive dared not act, and therefore the only policy was to wink hard and let sedition have its way. But Mr Butt seems to forget entirely that we now have a Government which knows its duty in this regard, and means to fulfil it. It does not quite understand why, when disloyal sentiments are printed and published, they should be condoned, or at the best overlooked, lest a bird of the air should carry the matter, and increased circulation should be given to the seditious sentiments. We much fear that, when language of the kind complained of is made public in Ireland, only too certain means are resorted to for giving it the widest possible circulation. We do not imagine that the warning will at all increase the circulation



in quarters where it is likely to do mischief; but even if it were to have that effect, the antidote will accompany the bane: they who may read the offensive words will know that the author of them is under the observation of the law, and will incur punishment for his next offence. If the notoriety which, in a free country, must follow the enforcement of the law, were to be a reason for not putting the law in force, where should we stand as regards the repression of crime?

But while Mr Butt, with consummate ingenuity, was setting forth the mischievous consequences that in Ireland would follow the vigorous action of the Government, he was careful not to breathe a hint of another effect, which, in the opinion of many, will be more than a counterpoise. We mean, the effect which the publicity given by the warning, and by the debate in Parliament, will produce in England and Scotland. Here there is not the slightest danger of the author of the article making converts to his way of thinking. Nothing but indignation will be excited by the indecorum. But, then, of what importance is it that this honest indignation should be aroused! The debate, if it have no other effect, will do infinite good by enlightening the people of Great Britain. It is good for us that we should be informed as to the state of feeling and the aims of parties in Ireland; and the debate in the House of Commons, and the comments of the press thereon, convey clearer knowledge to the public than elaborate treatises filled with reports and figures. A few such facts as this brought to light will speedily decrease the number of Britons who, on the announcement of an Irish grievance, are ready with misplaced sympathy. They have only to learn what it is that they are desired to sympathise with, and they know

how they ought to act. It would be a good thing if the articles of the 'Flag of Ireland,' and of other seditious papers, could be reprinted in large type, and posted in places of public resort all over Great Britain. They would aptly supplement the instruction afforded by the publication of Judge Keogh's judgment on the County Galway Election. Let it but be shown how Popery controls elections, and whither "veiled rebellion" is leading, and it will exceed the power of even Mr Gladstone's tongue to beguile us to a policy of weak indulgence. The strength of Irish disaffection and perversity has hitherto lain always in the division of English opinion with regard to Ireland. That division was the result of ignorance; people having no knowledge of their own were wont to adopt the views instilled by persons having an interest in promoting certain measures. But we may safely anticipate that, when more accurate knowledge concerning Ireland shall prevail, unanimity as to how she should be governed will also prevail. It is by contributing to this accurate knowledge that the warning to the 'Flag of Ireland,' and the debate thereon, will produce their most useful effect. Once let Ireland lose the power of dividing opinion in England, and the problem how to govern her is cleared of its main difficulties. We trust that she is losing that power; that the upas tree agitation is the last of the series of Irish excitements by which English politicians have so frequently obtained an unmerited eminence; and that in a few years we may find Ireland abandoning the hope of creating further dissension here, and endeavouring to work out her own weal and advancement, not by exhibiting her sores and whining for eleemosynary relief, but by persevering in in-

dustry and by abstaining from turbulence and crime.

Before we leave this subject it may be well to note a remark of a weekly contemporary, the 'Saturday Review,' which, in reference to this debate on the warning, takes occasion to say—"Although Mr Disraeli, in one of his election speeches, taunted Mr Gladstone with the severity of the exceptional laws now prevailing in Ireland, it is highly improbable that he will, for the present, relax existing restraints." Our contemporary for the moment, we fancy, overlooked the real point of Mr Disraeli's taunt. He could not have intended to reproach Mr Gladstone simply for having passed the Coercion Act; because probably Mr Disraeli is quite as well satisfied with that measure as Mr Gladstone can be. But Mr Gladstone bragged that he could pacify Ireland by other means, such as cutting down upas trees; and it was the failure of these means, as implied in the resort to a Coercion Act, with which Mr Disraeli twitted him. Another sentence from the same article in the 'Saturday Review' has our entire concurrence, and is worth quoting—"When Irish members truly assert that crime has greatly decreased since the enactment of the last Coercion Bill, they supply the most complete defence of a measure which has produced so beneficial an effect."

The nearest approach to a sensation that has been reached in the new House of Commons had place when the First Lord of the Admiralty introduced the Navy estimates. A "scare," as some honourable members called it, was the consequence of his speech. And, certainly, between the First Lord's announcement and the reply given by Mr Goschen, ground was afforded, if not for terror, at least for serious reflec-

tions. The combatants evidently did not—perhaps they did not care to—understand each other exactly. The reply contained no direct answer to the speech. The speakers generally, bringing up masses of facts and figures, used them so as to illustrate, each some particular argument which he himself was desirous of impressing on the House; but there was very little attempt towards bringing out for the information of Parliament, and of the public generally, the real state of our navy. Mr Ward Hunt necessarily possesses only a general acquaintance with the subject. His speech, standing alone, affords a pretty clear view; but his opponents, aware of the advantage which they possessed from longer acquaintance with details, quickly overlaid his facts with many sorts of matters, not exactly irrelevant, but not straight to the points at issue, and soon created a pretty intricate confusion. About one thing there is no doubt—namely, that the First Lord declared that the state of the fleet is not satisfactory, and that a considerable expenditure would be required to make it so. Mr Goschen, in reply, was understood to admit the imputation, but to demand why, as there was a surplus of six millions, the Government did not immediately set about remedying the defect. Afterwards Mr Goschen said he did not mean to admit the charge at all; and it is probable that he did not, but that what he wanted to imply, although he put it clumsily, was—"It seems inconsistent with your declaration that you do not ask for more money, seeing that you have inherited such a surplus: as you do not ask this, one may take the liberty of supposing that you greatly exaggerate the deficiency." But no; Mr Hunt said there was no inconsistency at all. The state of things was as he had



represented it. He had provided to meet some of the deficiency, but it was impossible to meet the whole of it in one year, even though the money were voted. Some time would be required for the gradual restoration of the fleet to a state of efficiency. Mr Childers afterwards tried to encourage us by declaring that whether it may have been carefully looked after or not, we have a navy by which we can hold our own against the three principal maritime powers, and that in six months we could sweep all their ships from off the seas. This is a cheering opinion as far as it goes, but it is not a sailor's opinion, and it in no wise tends to clear up the doubt as to whether all the ships which might and ought to have been maintained in seagoing and fighting condition have been so maintained. After a perusal of the whole of the debates on the subject, one can hardly doubt that the Radical Ministers, chained and bound by their promises and professions regarding economy, have persuaded themselves from time to time that necessary repairs and construction might be postponed, and the postponements have led to the unsatisfactory state of things which Mr Hunt deprecates. Indeed, as things have turned out, nothing could have been more unfortunate than the boast about decreased expenditure which the Radicals made in 1868, because circumstances have been dictating an increased expenditure in naval matters; and, although this has not been owing to any fault of the authorities at the Admiralty, they have been restrained from taking proper means to meet it by their former loud professions. Materials and labour have advanced full 25 per cent—a good reason for increasing certain provisions of the estimate 25 per cent; but Ministers who had made such a fuss about

their predecessors' estimates did not dare to propose the necessary increase of cost. Again, the ships of the present day, in proportion to the number of men they carry, are far more expensive in first cost than the ships of thirty years ago. But this is not all. It is found that the modern ironclads keep the seas but a short time before they require repairs, and that the repairs are so expensive that in a period of ten years or so they come to as much as half the original price of the ship. Where repairing is such a serious matter, it is no wonder if a Government which pledged itself to economy shirked these repairs whenever excuse could be found for doing so. Fortunately, the difficulties which we have just stated are not peculiar to Great Britain. Other countries must find them as great hindrances as we do. And then it appears that there is another constant source of disappointment and loss, which, though we cannot avoid it, must affect expenditure very seriously. We allude to the experimental character of the costly achievements of naval architecture. Formerly, after long experience in one almost constant style of building, we could set about framing a ship with the certainty that, if constructed with ordinary care, she would answer the purpose intended. But nothing of the kind can be predicted of the curiously formed things which we create nowadays. No doubt the cleverest artists design them with the most anxious endeavour that they should succeed; but they do not always succeed for all that. The debates of this year show how a ship, after having been built at immense cost to sweep the high seas, may not prove fit to send away from the coast. Indeed, there are reasons in plenty why the estimates of a great naval power must be heavy. But after all, although it is plain that

the most watchful of Ministers may, after a large expenditure, possibly have but little to show for it; yet there is no excuse at all in these days for the Minister who, to make show of saving, neglects our defence. When ships are boldly built, there is the risk that they may prove dreadfully expensive; but when their construction or repair is neglected, there is danger of ruin. In these circumstances, the advantage is apparent of being ruled by Ministers who, without self-contradiction or self-conviction, can speak out their minds as to the actual condition of our fleet, and as to the expense absolutely necessary in order to maintain an unquestionable naval supremacy. The transition period now current cannot but be an expensive period; but that consideration need not "scare" us, for without doubt the country will cheerfully supply the requisite funds, provided only that it finds open dealing and clear expositions from those who have the ordering of the navy. Men of all parties, including Sir W. V. Harcourt, have testified that we cannot spend our money to better purpose.

A curious remark which fell from Mr E. J. Reed in the course of the debate of April 30th passed without explanation from the speaker of it, or comment from any other member. Mentioning the Devastation, he said he believed she would be found the most valuable ship in the Navy, *though naval officers might not be able to appreciate the ships that the Government had put into their hands*. Who, then, are they who are to develop the merits of these ships, and use them for our advantage? Will Mr Reed move them and fight them? Will the Civil Lords lead on the iron-clad column to break the enemy's line? Either naval officers must entirely appreciate the ships which they are to work, or the excellen-

ces of those ships need not be. *De non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio*, is entirely true of the merits of ships in the eyes of naval officers. Either we must educate our officers up to the point of comprehending the capabilities of the Devastation and other great experiments, or the capabilities might as well not exist. Or, may we view the matter in another way, and say that, as long as naval officers do not admit particular advantages and merits to reside in certain ships, we hardly feel justified in assuming those advantages and merits as proved by the testimony of Mr E. J. Reed?

Two debates in the House of Commons, on our future policy in West Africa, have brought to light very convincingly the degree to which we stand entangled in that region. Three points of information appear to have been principally made clear by the discussion. 1st, that the Black War might have been avoided. 2d, That we cannot go forward—*i.e.*, we cannot assume more decided territorial control and maintain peace among the tribes by our overruling power. 3d, That we cannot go backward—*i.e.*, recede from our position on the Gold Coast, and leave the native races and the white traders to themselves.

The war, it would seem, grew out of the transfer to us of the Elmina territory. There is every reason to believe that in respect to that transfer we used tolerably sharp practice, making the transaction as insulting as possible to the King of Ashanti, without perhaps doing him much substantial wrong. But then, with savage natures, it is harder to put up with a slight than with a damage. All our soft sawder had been sent to America, and we could not command a few grains to reduce the swelling in Koffi's back; but we had some shot and shell, for



which we could find no use in civilised lands, and we sent that to soothe the monarch's wounded honour, and made Elmina too hot to hold him. After that feat, there was no receding till Gladstone's Black War had been accomplished. Peradventure, our Government thought, at the time of that unlucky Elmina business, that we could carry things with a high hand. If so, they made a grand mistake, which is not to be wondered at when "the deplorably scanty information" to which Mr Gladstone confessed is remembered. An it had been known that Koffi was valiant and so cunning of fence, Mr Gladstone would probably have seen him in greater heat than that of the Gold Coast ere he shelled him out of Elmina. That is the only possible explanation of prompt hostility on the part of the Gladstone Government. They expected that there would be no resistance, and that they might enjoy a cheap triumph. But they were altogether wrong, and we have had to pay for their error. They deserve every taunting word that has been spoken at them for the inconsistency which made a word and a blow their practice on the Gold Coast, while no amount of provocation from powerful nations could elicit from them the slightest sign of emotion. Their mischief in Africa cannot now be remedied; neither, we hope, will it be forgotten.

We cannot, it seems, turn the *quasi* protectorate which we exercise on the Gold Coast into an active, vigilant, practical control, by which we might effect much good, because of the slavery, and the trade in slaves, which are there so prevalent. No such practices can be allowed to exist where the rule of Great Britain is recognised. This obstacle is not due to the scruples of the past or the present Government, but to

an unconquerable prepossession in the mind of the British people. Such firmly cherished principles are not uncommon among us. They are the extreme manifestations of charitable and highly honourable feelings; but the effect of them is, that we leave undone a large amount of possible good because we are unable to do all the good that is conceivable. Nobody at all seems to doubt that by establishing a firm power in Western Africa, we might at once produce enormous improvement, and start some of the tribes in the path of civilisation. We don't do this, because there is not the slightest hope of these tribes being in any way induced to give up slavery, which to them is the most natural and indispensable thing in the world. They and we see it in entirely different lights; we occupy no common ground in regard to it: it would require years, perhaps centuries, of intercourse with civilised people to make the savages comprehend why slavery is odious and wicked, or to make them feel at all as we do in regard to it. Because of this difference of lights,—because we have no hope of summarily putting an end to slavery, with all its hideous accompaniments,—we decide to stand aloof, and to refrain from doing the good that is in our power—from giving the first blow, probably, to this very institution of slavery. Surely the reputation of Great Britain in regard to slavery is pretty well established by this time. She can afford to yield to a temporary necessity, without incurring the suspicion that she is growing careless about principles which she has disseminated at so much labour and cost; she is not obliged to abandon the substance for the shadow.

It must be remembered that our recent experience on the Gold Coast shows the protected tribes to be

sunk so low, that there is not a chance of persuading them to make an effort, warlike or peaceful, for their own or others' advantage. Sir Garnet Wolseley and his staff have made us understand how inducements, which to a people with the slightest elevation of character or energy would have been irresistible, were utterly ineffectual with these debased natures. Compulsion is not a desirable means of putting life into a people, but in this case it seems to be the only means. Thus the question presents itself: Shall we for a time allow resort to the only means which promise success? or shall we, from a high-flown adherence to the letter of a maxim (of a generous maxim, without doubt), allow these poor creatures to continue in their fearfully degraded state of sloth, ignorance, and ferocity?

Means *ought* to be found of getting over this difficulty; but we are not at all confident that they will, for our people are most arbitrary on many points. Yet they have, after a long time, found out how to let our flag float over populations with whose religions we have no sympathy, and whose practices are abominations to us; and we have found that, by being simply tolerant at the first, we have, after a time, been able to infuse our sentiments among the subject populations. The practice of *Suttee* in India has almost, if not entirely, been eradicated in this way. But if we had declined to exert British authority where *Suttee* was practised, it might have been prevalent to this day. Our prudery much resembles the caution of the man who intended never to go into the water till he could swim!

There are obvious reasons why we cannot, immediately after this war, withdraw wholly from the theatre of it. We cannot desert the tribes whom we have raised to

the position of allies, taught to lean on us, and rendered obnoxious to the wrath of Koffi. The retreating English would be followed by the groans of the Fantees, Wassahs, and so on. And, of course, we are not going to depart, as Lord Carnarvon has explained. We cannot ascertain from his lordship's speech that the character of the Protectorate will differ much from what it was before; and we regret that this is the case. We would have preferred the consolidation, and, if necessary, extension, of our government, and the establishment of a firm rule; but probably the nation would not consent to this, so there was no use in proposing it.

Two or three changes in the machinery of government intended to be carried out at this unpleasant station seem likely to be beneficial, and we are glad to see that we are to have once more a Gold Coast corps. We had one before, which afterwards had its name changed, and became a West India Regiment. Then came Mr Cardwell and abolished the corps; immediately after which he went to war on the Gold Coast. While we had a Gold Coast corps, we had no war on the Gold Coast; while we had a war on the Gold Coast, we had no Gold Coast corps; the War Minister had reduced it just by the time it was wanted. Looking at this fact, the Black War may be seen to be directly traceable to the promises of economy by which partly the Liberal Government attained to power in 1868.

The Radicals, we trust, will be found to have much overshot their mark in attempting to create excitement by their Bill for household franchise in the counties. The reform bait is getting very stale, even in times favourable to agitation and change; but now, just that a strong reaction against revolutionary



movements has set in, and when we are watching in uncertainty the important effects of other and sufficiently hazardous experiments, it was silly as well as wicked to attempt to hurry forward more leaps in the dark. We think we should have preferred to give a stern and peremptory opposition to the attempt, but we must suppose that Ministers knew what they were about when they met the Bill as they did. No doubt the Prime Minister, with admirable temper, counselled the House of Commons as to the mode of dealing with the question. The right hon. gentleman did not let it appear that he is in principle opposed to this measure; and he certainly did not refuse to acknowledge the weight of the arguments which in the abstract can be adduced in support of it. His reasoning, on the contrary, went to prove that an abstract view of the subject is at the present time absolutely useless, because the proposed change cannot be put in practice except in connection with other and more startling changes to which we do not at all see our way. Mr Forster, with (for him) singular recklessness, argued that the right course would be to concede the franchise, and then, if it must be so, to adjust any involvements or anomalies that might arise out of it, treating these presumed consequences of it more as excuses for postponing the desired legislation than as *bona fide* obstacles. But the Premier did not allow the House to remain long under the influence of this exhortation. He demonstrated with the greatest clearness that the collateral changes, which must accompany the change proposed, could in no wise be left for after-treatment as mere appendages and simple adjustments, but that they are entitled to quite as patient consideration as the measure which is

to render them necessary. The complete reallocation of the representation which he showed to be involved in the new franchise was, though he treated it humorously, enough to raise some little feeling of caution in even the most Radical mind. The disfranchisement of a large proportion of the existing constituencies, and the creation of new constituencies, the working of which it is impossible to conceive beforehand, are designs which may well excite apprehension. Grant that they cannot be altogether put aside, and that they must sooner or later occupy the attention of Government and of Parliament; still they are not ripe for consideration at the present time. Even if opinion were more matured concerning them than it is, it would be most inexpedient to force them before the Legislature until we have more experience of the situation in which other, and not inconsiderable, reforms have already landed us. We are by no means clear as to the operation of the last Reform Act or the Ballot Act; but surely we ought to understand the nature and effects of those changes which have been legalised before we pass on to more sweeping and more dangerous innovations. Fortunately, there was not the least appearance of the wisdom of the Government having to contend with popular impatience in recommending the postponement of these momentous questions. It seemed rather as if the abhorrence of revolutionary movement were more vivid in the people themselves than the conviction of its imprudence can be in Ministerial minds. We have been gorged with reforms and projects of reforms until we are absolutely nauseated. We find in the reforms of the late Government disappointment and dissatisfaction so great, that if the present Government were weak enough to start the

County Franchise movement by way of gaining popularity, it is more than probable that the people would check them so sharply as to take the edge off their appetite for that kind of excitement for some time to come. But Ministers understand the popular mind far better than to tempt it in this direction. That they had been right in discountenancing the proposal was abundantly proved in the House by the large majority which rejected the Bill, and out of the House by the entire acquiescence of the country in the action of its representatives. Even those who desire to promote the interests of the Liberal party hesitate now about embarking in a course of agitation; for, since the results of some recent changes have been observed, they suspect that by so doing they might be only labouring for their adversaries. The agitators who have been trying to get up the new reform cry, and to benefit by it, are the only persons, apparently, who regret the fate of the hapless Bill. Some of their kind will no doubt succeed in rousing the people to action again some day; but they will not do it by offers of electoral reform. That lure will draw no longer. The people who try to agitate with it show that they don't understand their not very respectable business.

We wish that agitators in general were as unsuccessful; but they do their work only too effectually sometimes; and we are now suffering, and have yet to suffer, for the agitation which procured for the late Ministry their term of office. The rousing the feelings of class against class, and the inflammation of the selfish desires of particular classes who fancy they can obtain the gratification of them by combined action, have brought our manufactures, our commerce, and now our

agriculture, into a most unfortunate condition. One of two results seems to be certainly impending. Either by the continued success of these combinations—and the longer they succeed the more destructive they will be in the end—we shall drive away from among us that pre-eminence in industry, and consequently that wealth, which have so largely contributed to make us the powerful nation that we have been, and, we hope, are; or the combining operatives, after the experiences of a few years, will, on striking a balance of gains and losses, discover that, years of plenty and years of famine all reckoned, they are at the end of a given period worse off than they would have been if they had worked steadily along at medium wages. They would, without the aid of the combinations, have benefited in time of prosperity, and they have been forced, in spite of combination, to submit to reduction in time of adversity. The difference probably is this, that in prosperous times combination has forced up their earnings more rapidly than in the natural course of things, thereby precipitating the return to evil fortune; and that in adverse times it has aggravated reduction of earnings, and consequent distress, by organising resistance to dispensations which it is not in the power of man to resist effectually. The prosperity has been more suddenly prosperous, and the adversity has been more tediously biting. In a majority of cases, too, it is to be feared that the wages of prosperity have been carelessly spent, and there has been no provision for the time of distress. This is a rather bad account; and there must be added to the side of loss the constant contribution made to the funds of the association. Reckonings like these, we say, may before long make the more thoughtful workmen ask themselves whether, after all, the



combination may not have been a mistake.

We scarcely think it an advantage to a Government to be faced by a very feeble and dejected Opposition, or by no Opposition at all. Yet, to proceed for a while unmolested is preferable to being set upon in the first week of office by a combination of incongruous factions, which can agree in nothing except hostility to the existing Administration. The latter has often been the fortune of Conservative Governments; but now at last Mr Disraeli's Ministry is able to address itself to its many arduous duties, harassed by no attack from without. Storms will arise ere long, no doubt; but, by the time they come, the governing body will have become acquainted with its work, and occasional strife is the lot of all Administrations. Meanwhile, one marks with pleasure the entire satisfaction evinced by the people at their work in

the late election. There is not a sign of their having acted in haste or passion—not a breath of regret for the unsuccessful politicians who have been displaced. It does not appear that we are going to be ruined by extravagance, although certainly the public service will not be allowed to suffer from parsimony: there is no dread felt of our being wantonly involved in war, although we have taken the white feather out of Britannia's helmet. We do not find ourselves the worse for the sudden blight that has come over the various leagues, conferences, communes, and so on; it even seems as if the air were a little purer since they lost their tongues. The believers in Liberal infallibility have had to admit the possibility of a Conservative Ministry coming to power; perhaps, by a strong effort of mind, they may this summer receive the idea of a Conservative rule of some duration.

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